

ONWARD



ANARCHIST NEWS, OPINION, THEORY, AND STRATEGY OF TODAY

Volume 1, Issue 2



Fall 2000



One Dollar

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AND MORE!

Protests Rock World Bank, IMF

Sept. 26 saw worldwide demonstrations against the IMF/World Bank. In Prague, nearly 10,000 protestors from around the world besieged to shut down their annual meetings. Maintaining a circular blockade of the conference facilities, and some even gaining access to the heavily-guarded complex itself, protests brought further attention to the massive disapproval of 'globalization.' Protests were city-wide and numerous occurred with a single united voice: Shut down the IMF and World Bank!

People gathered in Namesti Miru square at 9am and sorted into 3 groups (blue, pink and yellow) led by their colored flags. At noon the march began in opposite directions to surround the conference centre and confuse police. The yellow march took the main route to the bridge leading to the conference centre. Italian and Spanish groups linked to the Ya Basta! movement – dressed in heavy padding

and carrying heavy shielding – approached lines of heavily armoured police occupying the bridge. At the police barricade on the bridge opposite the conference centre, banners in various languages declared the protests illegal and that force



Ya Basta! faces off with Czech police

would be used to disperse them. For over 2 hours, groups pushed against police lines, but the narrow bridge covered entirely with armoured police vehicles was too much to break. Eventually, Ya Basta! left the bridge to join the other marches.

On the other side of the center, the Pink group cut the fence to stop people from getting hurt if the police trapped them. It was dragged off and became part of the activist's barricades. The pink group moved past the military tanks, hundreds of armoured police, and dozens of army personnel and found a side street blocked only by a thin line of uniformed police. Masked up black clad activists grabbed a metal barrier and ran at the line and a battle ensued. Sticks and rocks were

thrown as police responded with deafening loud firecrackers, smoke grenades, and water cannons. Meanwhile the samba band and other activists blockaded the streets forcing a number of delegate's cars off the road.

The blue march moved down the valley separating the city from the centre and met heavy police resistance. Stones and other objects were thrown at police who unleashed concussion grenades and tear gas. A number of protestors climbed up a hill and got close to the conference complex, while the massive confrontations in the street continued until the late afternoon.

The pink group, surprising police by changing locations and directions quickly and spontaneously, was able to approach the conference complex from the other side. Some protestors managed to occupy parts of the complex, before the police responded with concussion grenades, tear gas and serious physical violence, but blockades remained around the centre until early evening, locking the delegates in for several hours.

At dark, thousands blocked locations where delegates were planning to spend the evening. Confrontations with police and large groups of protestors were city-wide; some engaged in property damage of banks, McDonalds etc. The police couldn't retain control in several locations.

The protests were inspirational in successfully organizing people from all over the world, as well as in forcing the IMF/World Bank meetings to end early. However, hundreds of people arrested faced brutal conditions in jail and there's still a lot to be done on the legal end. Help is greatly needed. One thing remains certain: global capitalist institutions like the IMF and World Bank have nowhere to run. (This article was compiled from information gathered from www.prague.indymedia.org which also contains legal updates, solidarity actions worldwide and more on the protests in general.)

We Win Again?

Thoughts on the Republican National Convention Protests

By Scott

On Tuesday, August 1st, the second day of the Republican National Convention, several thousand activists completely shut down center city Philadelphia for most of a day. The activists plan was to disrupt the convention as much as possible, draw attention away from the farcical political party gathering passing itself off as 'democracy' and highlight the US 'criminal injustice' system.

The activists used a wide range of colorful tactics, including soccer games on major streets, "lock downs" (activists chained together and unmovable) in other major streets as well as roving bands of blockades such as the "Clown Block" and the infamous "Black Bloc." Spread throughout downtown, we committed all kinds of fun and mayhem. Convention delegates were often delayed getting from their hotels to the Convention. A huge portion of the activists were Anarchists, although many were Marxists and people without any specific ideology. These disparate groups of people worked together with little friction. Non-hierarchical 'spokescouncils' making consensus decisions successfully planned and carried out the actions.

I am a Philadelphia Anarchist and member of Philadelphia Direct Action Group (PDAG) who took part in months of planning for the August 1st protests and helped play a key role in carrying out the actions. From the above description, one would believe that the August 1st actions

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The Current Zapatista Struggle

Silencing the Farces of Democracy

By Jenny Cassel

The Zapatistas, otherwise known as the *Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional*, or EZLN, emerged from the jungle of Mexico's southernmost state of Chiapas on January 1, 1994, when they "took" six major cities and towns in that entity, including the colonial capital of San Cristobal de las Casas. Made up almost entirely of indigenous persons, the Zapatista insurgents came largely from the Lacandon jungle of eastern Chiapas, but also included some recruits from the state's central and northern regions. Nearly all were young, poor, and defiant of tradition. They claimed

they saw no other way to get their various needs met by the Mexican government other than by way of arms, and were quick to make their motives known: on the day of their attack, they issued a communique they called the "Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle," de-

manding "work, land, housing, food, health care, education, independence, liberty, democracy, justice, and peace" as well as the "[suspension] of the plunder of natural resources in the places controlled by the EZLN," and calling on the Mexican people to support and participate in their plan. With international



Zapatistas in their homeland of Chiapas

eyes peeled on Mexico that day to view the initiation of NAFTA, the EZLN's uprising and declarations caused international uproar, and soon thousands of citizens from Mexico as well as various other (mostly European and North American) countries answered the Zapatista's call for support. However, international "civil society's" support was conditioned on the Zapatistas' use of peaceful tactics, and citi-

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WHAT IS ONWARD?

ONWARD is an Anarchist newspaper intending to facilitate both a report of Anarchist actions worldwide, and foster analysis of current events from an Anarchist perspective, all in the process of building an intelligent, well informed and powerful revolutionary movement that can challenge the present state apparatus. Our goal is to show the relation of the different liberation struggles (animal, earth and human) and the unification of often separated movements. Different Anarchist viewpoints (Syndicalist, Feminist, Green etc.) are not mutually exclusive, but rather all fit together in the larger revolutionary framework. Real liberation is freedom in every sphere of life; we must dissolve all forms of hierarchy that tangle the world in coercion, oppression, and domination and replace them with liberatory and cooperative structures guaranteeing all to participate in reshaping the local and world communities. We aim for a social sphere that needs and desires no such rulings over our lives and communities. We demand decision making be direct, not representative, and that no ruler and no rule should reign over society. Our short-term goal is unification which will result in the long-term goal and action of social revolution.

To that end, **ONWARD** is a forum for Anarchist news locally and globally, and contains Anarchist and radical history, theory and opinion in order to not only critique the social and political relationships that exist today, but also to present a viable and logical future based on voluntary cooperation, direct and participatory democracy, mutual aid, solidarity, and freedom; in short, Anarchy.

SUBMISSIONS:

ONWARD relies on submissions from people throughout the world. They can be on a wide variety of topics: from news to opinion to theory. In an effort to further the struggle, please include information on how to get involved in the issue you're reporting on, but please do not exceed 2,500 words in length. Pictures and other graphics are needed and should be sent via land mail to our PO Box listed below. Though we prefer articles be sent on email, they can also be sent on IBM format disks, or send hard copies to the PO Box. The collective reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity, but please include a name, address (land and email) and phone number in the case of large editions.

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The views expressed in **ONWARD** are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the ideas of the Onward Collective. Articles appear in the paper because we find them relevant, not because they mirror our own beliefs. No article in the publication is intended to encourage or promote illegal activity; the content is solely for educational purposes. Intentionally revised spellings are expressions of individual contributor's political beliefs (i.e. 'womyn' instead of 'women').

DEADLINES: ISSUE 3

Submissions/Ads: December 1, 2000.
Issue 3 will be out late December.

THE ONWARD COLLECTIVE:

Rob Augman, Neil Batelli, Dan Berger, Lauren Buie, Ynes DeLoach, Je-Free Frank, Tom Gable, Tom Thomson, Justin Tichy

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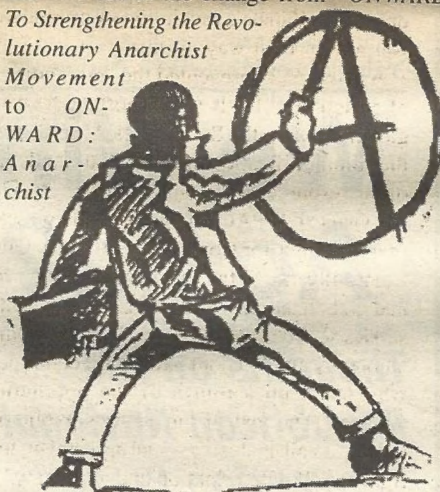
From the Onward Collective,

Wandering the streets of Philadelphia, several things became clear. First, stagnation equals failure; if we don't constantly change our tactics, we will accomplish little, especially during mass actions. Though the civil disobedience style direct action planning in Philadelphia differed somewhat from the mass protests in Seattle and Washington DC, the basic premise was the same. Second and obvious is that when the state feels threatened it will lash out vehemently against dissenters with the media to back it up. Therefore, we must never depend on nor expect the decency of the state or the sympathies/'objectivity' of corporate media. Lastly, the Republican Convention protests showed me we have a lot of work to do both internally (within the movement — and I use the word movement somewhat loosely here) and externally (expanding the movement, bringing our critiques to a larger audience and actually remaking society). This is an exciting time period indeed, but if we are not careful, we will end up creating our own demise and enter another period of revolutionary dormancy.

Philly saw more involvement by people of color than Seattle and DC, but was still a largely white event. We must begin to organize *with* the community rather than *for* the community; in both Philly and DC (the two I have been to), the predominantly white populated convergence centers were located in primarily Black neighborhoods with many local residents confused if not totally unaware of the meanings behind the protests. The police and media did an excellent job in trying to convince the communities that protesters are terrorists. It is our job to work with the community and tie in the problems affecting it (police brutality, gentrification etc.) to the issues we are protesting. Unity and solidarity are our greatest strengths, but we often fail to actualize the greatest amount of our potential due to our own internalized racism (and other oppressive beliefs/actions). Activist Chris Crass offers some suggestions on moving 'beyond the whiteness' (pg. 16); we must smash our own internalized oppression if we ever hope to destroy external oppression.

Nothing comes into existence out of a vacuum. This issue of **ONWARD** features articles on groups like the MST in Brazil (pg. 4) and the Zapatistas (pg. 1) that have been doing incredible work for years. While the burgeoning levels of dissent and growing use of the internet make such far away struggles closer, the fact remains that organizations around the world have been creating the revolutionary groundwork for years. These movements have been accomplishing real revolutionary change for so long, but have *not* relied solely on mass actions or civil disobedience. When looking back on the formation of the organization, an activist in the Young Lords recounts going to the

community and asking what needed to be done. The activist was surprised when neighbor after neighbor complained of the lack of trash pick-up; surely not a glamorous activity, but nevertheless a necessary one. So the Young Lords organized to get rid of the trash in the community. The point is that real change exists on a community level and often does not involve glamorous activities, but revolution is hard work, not glamorous work. If we become too dependent on doing only what is fun and 'risky,' we become a movement acting solely on self-interests and our critiques will be lost to ourselves, let alone the outside world. (In fact, this self-serving form of activism led to the change from **ONWARD**: *To Strengthening the Revolutionary Anarchist Movement* to **ONWARD**: *Anarchist*



News, Opinion, Theory, and Strategy of Today.)

We must get back to our communities to organize on that level. We must, as Cindy Milstein writes (pg. 12), take the participatory democratic structures of spokescouncils that permeates action planning to our communities to build counter-institutions on a community level. This is the type of direct action that must become a priority, because it is proactive. While lockdown-style direct action has its advantages, we must beware the emphasis currently placed on such actions as the only way of being radical and effective. We must reexamine our tactics and goals, for a movement based solely or even predominantly on lockdowns and mass actions is easy to squash because it is so reactive. Bluntly put, mass action without real, hands on, community action will result in no meaningful lasting change.

We must be *serious* about creating revolutionary change. We must ensure that destroying existing oppressive social structures happens at the same rate as building a new society based on voluntary participation and cooperation. To do this, we need to get organized! As Ernesto Aguilar argues (pg. 13), a revolutionary Anarchist federation is needed to build a revolutionary Anarchist movement on an (inter)national level.

It was exciting to see in Philly that the Black Bloc are not alone in expressing property destruction-type militancy but it is also problematic that the term 'militant' has become synonymous with property destruction. Just like with 'direct action,' we must not limit our definition of 'militance.' We must militantly act against capitalism, just as we must militantly build a new society. Direct action, from lockdowns to civil disobedience to underground acts, is necessary in fighting oppressive institutions and actions, just as direct action in the form of working within the community and building a real community based on Anarchist principles is integral in creating a new society. Direct action should be our method of operation regardless of the situation. We must never cease being direct and up-front.

As resistance to global capitalism and imperialism rises, and as we (hopefully) begin to *fully* recognize who and what our enemy is/does and build solidarity amongst traditionally separate groups, we must expect and prepare for increased state repression. Though often said, it warrants repeating, as it is not something to take lightly. State repression will not only manifest itself by violating 'rights' that have always existed only on paper anyway; it will show up in the form of increasing numbers of political prisoners and, as seen recently in Brazil (pg. 4), state murders. To that end, we must support those presently incarcerated (see pg. 7, 18, and 20). The state can and will use anything to try and stop our revolutionary work. It is our job to support each other and keep fighting. One of the best ways to resist government harassment is to understand it; see pg. 5 for the first of a 2 part series on the history of COINTELPRO by Greg Wells.

Finally, we must stay on our toes and never lose our creativity. I'd like to close with the words of the late Kwame Ture that seem particularly appropriate at this point in time: "If we are to consider ourselves as revolutionaries, we must acknowledge that we have an obligation to succeed in pursuing revolution. Hence, we must acknowledge not only the power of our enemies, but our own power as well. Realizing the nature of our power, we must not deny ourselves the exercise of our options available to us; we must use the strength of our enemy to undo him, keeping him confused and off balance. We must organize with perfect clarity to be utterly unpredictable. When our enemies expect us to respond to provocation with violence, we must react calmly and peacefully; just as when they anticipate our passivity, we must throw a grenade."

Enjoy issue 2 of **ONWARD**; we are pleased with the response from issue 1 and can only go forward. We look forward to hearing from you with comments, criticism, articles or anything else. Get in touch.

In Solidarity and Struggle,
Dan Berger, The Onward Collective

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Autonomy and Global Capital in Chiapas

By Yvonne Sorovac

Halfway up the hillside stairs to the Church of San Cristobal de las Casas someone has scrawled a tag on the plaster wall, "Zapata." His mark is all over this place. "Viva Zapata!" walls down-town scream. He is almost not a man any more. If the people of Mexico exhumed his corpse, they would expect to find "Libertad y Tierra" (land and liberty), the ideals failed by the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution, buried in the fertile ground. The promises and hopes of those early decades of the 20th century are still vital and mentioning the name Emiliano Zapata is like conjuring all the promise and optimism of the Revolution. At the end of the Mexican Revolution, in 1920, Mexico was left with a constitution that had lofty provisions for the freedom and rights of people within its borders. Like many other constitutions, its promises were never fulfilled for the majority of the people it governed, because they were controlled by an undemocratic body of privileged men who had a very narrow idea of who was entitled to "Land and Liberty."

Now, eighty years after the end of the Revolution, a people's army, named after one of the people's most hallowed icons, is waiting, along with their supporters, for the freedoms of that constitution to be actualized. Since the 1996 signing of the San Andres Accords, the Mexican government has made no sincere attempts at fulfilling the agreements it made with the Zapatista's and civil society. Newly elected PAN (National Action Party) president, Vincente Fox, has been quoted as saying that he will "work out the problem in fifteen minutes," and that he wants to meet with Zapatista figure Subcomandante Marcos. Fox says he wishes to open up the dialogue between the government and the coalition of indigenous peoples and their supporters, who are represented in the San Andres Accords. A lot of speculation is being made about the era of democracy that Fox's election represents. Although Fox's victory does mark the first time the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) has lost the presidency since its inception after the revolution, it does not signify any elemental structural changes in the power dynamic of the government. Any era of democracy this ushers in is a shallow one that still thinly veils the predominance of capital over democracy. As is evidenced by other "democratic" countries, the presence of a choice at the ballot box is usually just a chance for the people to pick which wealthy man will be

elected and which economic model will shape government policy. The fact that Vincente Fox is an advocate of free trade shows little departure from the policies of former PRI presidents Zedillo and Salinas. As a former president of Latin America Coca-Cola, he represents the exact globalizing force that sparked the Zapatista uprising by its elitist and undemocratic nature.

The San Andres Accords can't be activated within an entity that is pursuing inclusion in the global market. Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution, like the accords, was an obstacle to free trade, and the Mexican government revised it into virtual non-existence. Article 27 established the ejido (eh-hee-doh) system, a form of communal land distribution, which gave ultimate ownership of land to the state and made private sale of these lands illegitimate. In essence, the revision of Article 27 was the privatization of agricultural lands. This land privatization, and the inclusion in the global market, are the forces driving the campesinos of San Caralampio, and the rest of Mexico, into poverty. The campesinos have tried various crops, the most modern fertilizers and pesticides (courtesy Monsanto). They say that everything grows well, grows beautifully, but that they can't compete with the large mechanized corporate farms. The prices for crops in the global market can't sustain local farmers and their families. Some times they will work at the nearby melon packing plant to pick up dearly needed income. The majority of their children forgo school for work after 6th grade. For them the preparations leading up to, which included the revision of Article 27, and the signing of NAFTA are a betrayal by the government on its promise to Zapata's revolutionary cry and a death warrant for their way of life.

As Article 27 prevented the commodification of agricultural lands (an important asset in the global market), the San Andres Accords prevent the commodification of indigenous lands and all of the resources within their boundaries. During our visit to CIEPAC (Economic and Political Research Center for Community Action), Gustavo Castro illustrated the links between the accords and globalization. The accords present many obstacles to free trade. Those obstacles being the autonomy and freedom of the indigenous people, who make up a fourth of the population in Chiapas. The text of the accords explicitly requires "an all-inclusive social agreement, to their right to self determination and autonomy." This autonomy would enable the indigenous to

"decide...their way of organizing themselves politically, socially, economically and culturally." Part of this autonomy is control of indigenous territories and their development. Valued commodities on these lands, such as minerals, timber, oil and coal, would then be controlled by the indigenous people. Since the indigenous cultures function with a different value system which is not entrenched in market and capitalist paradigms, that could keep prospectors from extracting those parts of the land for material profit.

The accords even have the potential to effect land use off of the indigenous territories. For instance, the principle of sustainability included in the accords requires protection or compensation "when the exploitation of natural resources carried out by the State causes damages to their habitat which may endanger their cultural survival." As an example, this could effect construction of dams on waterways that run through indigenous territories. As the producer of 55% of Mexico's hydroelectricity, Chiapas is a cash cow for potential energy corporation investors such as General Electric, which has expressed interest in development on lands which would be affected by the accords. Other commercial developments likely to pollute Chiapas waters would also be effected. Also in the constitutional reforms are "the rights of the indigenous towns to the use of plants and animals that are (sacred) sites and ceremonial centers, and the use of plants and animals that are considered sacred for strictly ritual use must also be insured." Considering how far-reaching the environmental effects of development in industrial countries has been on native plant and animal populations, and knowing that nature does not follow politically recognized boundaries, this provision could effect development not immediately located on indigenous lands.

Just as ex-president Salinas modified article 27 as a condition for US acceptance of Mexico as a first world trading partner, Fox will likely approach the accords as an obstacle to Mexico's inclusion in the elite group of globalized market power players. The U.S. government will not accept the actualization of the accords, and as the world's most powerful economic entity, this country wields a lot of influence. US architects of trade and government policy do not view the accords as a valid, dignified agreement between equals that works towards fulfilling the promise of liberty, justice and freedom. They view them as a pesky stumbling block in the creation of the neo-liberal economic model. These guidelines

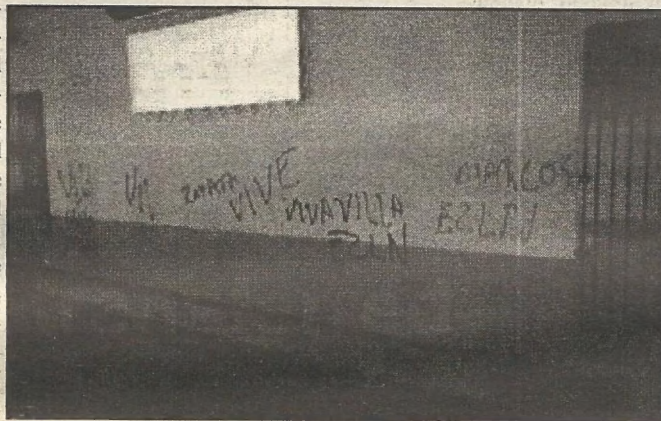
which so deeply affect the lives of the indigenous people's are treated like petty complaints that only block the realization of a perfected capitalist economic model, and therefore block "progress."

An official at the American Chamber of Commerce betrayed the patronizing, colonial attitude of the government to the indigenous when he summed up his understanding of their argument and vision. "People think that they can just grow corn and be happy," he stated, before going on to express the necessity for the commodification of those lands and the need to enter them into the global market. His analysis ignorantly reduced their concerns and culture into a simplistic, naïve and inferior model of existence because it did not correlate the values of a global, capital economy. When questioned what he thought a fair wage was, the spokesman replied "I don't know. What do you need to live around here? An egg, some rice and some beans." His reply clearly illustrates the racism inherent in the free market relationship between Mexico and more powerful countries, in which Mexico's "competitive advantage" is its cheap labor. Using the term "competitive advantage" is a sanitary way of saying that companies can afford to invest there because of the widespread conditions of poverty and lower standard of living.

The officials at the American Embassy are a bit more skilled at addressing these issues. I questioned a panel of representatives at the embassy as to how american interests would be affected if the San Andres Accords were actualized. Their was a nervous shuffle and then one of the panelists sucked some air through his teeth and said, "Well (emphatic exhale), that's a tough question..." He then evaded the question, speculating as to whether or not they would be enacted. I re-directed the panelists, pointing out that they were answering a question I had not asked. At this point another member of our visiting group made a comment that the panelists jumped on. They eventually came back to my question with this short, vague answer, "If the situation in Chiapas is resolved, I don't think that would have any effect on American interests," and quickly jumped to another question. Their nervous and evasive reaction to the query is indicative of the U.S. government's stance on the accords and the indigenous movement. I had



Mural commemorating those murdered in the Acteal massacre



Street in San Cristobal

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Yugoslav Rebellion Ousts Milosevic

By Ratibor Trivunac

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), which now consists of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro, was proclaimed in April 1992 after the disintegration of the socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, made up of the republics of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia (with two autonomous regions Vojvodina and Kosovo, and Metohia), Montenegro and Macedonia. FRY is located in the center of the Balkan Peninsula and it is surrounded by Albania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia. The population of FRY is 10.5 million, and the capital, Belgrade, is the largest city with around 2.5 million people.

After the collapse of the "communist" regime in the early 90's Milosevic and his Socialist Party of Serbia were brought to power by strong Serbian nationalism. Nationalistic leaders appeared in all other ex-Yugoslavian states and, with massive help from the US and other western countries, a series of wars in Yugoslavia began which, with several interruptions, lasted until the end of the Kosovo and Metohia crisis and the NATO bombing in 1999. War deteriorated the political and economic situation in FRY. The country was iso-

lated or expelled from all international organizations, and from the beginning of the 1992 war, strong economic sanctions were imposed. The standard of living shrunk until it reached bottom after the bombing, when Yugoslavia's average GDP rate was below Albania which, for years, was known as the poorest European country. The average monthly salary in Yugoslavia over the past several months was about 70 German marks. The main result of the war was the poverty of Yugoslavian people and the lack of basic human rights (free speech, etc). And Milosevic was still in power; now in coalition with his wife's

"communist" party (United Yugoslavian Left-JUL in Serbo-Croatian) and the extreme right-wing party (Radical Party of Serbia-SRS in Serbo-Croatian) of well known Serbian fascist Vojislav Seselj.



Protestors, joined by soldiers, storm the Parliament building in Belgrade. The building was later burned.

state-controlled, because it controlled public opinion. New laws were imposed from time to time, just to insure that opposition organizations don't

gain too much influence over people. The last elections in 1996 was the first time the Milosevic regime lost some grip on power. Opposition political parties won numerous local elections, but Milosevic denied it and only after several months of demonstrations were the election results recognized. From 1996 until now, nothing has changed-the standard of living is still falling, Milosevic and his allies were richer and people were poorer. Milosevic didn't want to negotiate with Albanian nationalists in the provinces of Kosovo and Metohia, so his government started another Yugoslavian war, which ended after the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia. Bombing hasn't affected Milosevic nor his clique. It only affected ordinary people; their workplaces, hospitals and schools were bombed and nationalism, which had slightly declined, once again exploded.

In the Sept. 24th elections, two candidates had the best chances of winning-Milosevic and Vojislav Kostunica. Kostunica, politically a conservative Serbian nationalist and economically a neo-liberal, was the candidate of the united opposition parties under the name of Democratic Opposition of Serbia-DOS. Anarchists from Serbia were faced with a hard choice: Should we vote or not? The situation was harsh as we were

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The MST (Landless Worker's Movement)

Land and Freedom

By Iain McInnes

The *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (Landless Rural Workers' Movement), or simply MST, epitomises the dedication and revolutionary zeal of one of the largest and most dynamic socio-political movements in the rural South. It mobilises thousands of impoverished families to occupy both under-productive estates and public offices. Essentially acting as catalyst for agrarian reform, the MST uses non-violent direct action to pressure the Federal Government to act upon its rhetoric, by upholding the rights of the 1988 constitution.

At the MST's IV National Congress, in Brasília August 7-11, Luiz Beltrane, 93, was awarded for his commitment to the Movement over the past decade. One of his proudest achievements was being among the thousands of landless rural workers who marched cross-country demanding land, agrarian reform and social justice.

"In October 1997, we participated in the 'March of One Hundred Thousand People.' We walked from São Paulo to Brasília - a distance of 1,050 kilometres," he said proudly. "Oh, and last year, I took part in the 'Popular March for Brazil'... from Rio de Janeiro to Brasília." Covering 1,600 km in 60 days, the landless families slept in makeshift, plastic tents, receiving food and solidarity from supporters along the way.

On both occasions, on arrival in Brasília, they were joined, by other popular sectors of Brazilian society - including *favelados* (shanty-town dwellers), trade unionists, students, and workers of the burgeoning informal economy.

The seventh largest economy in the world, Brazil remains the most inequitable society on earth. This combined legacy of colonialism, military dictatorship, and contemporary macroeconomics is reflected in the nation's land tenure patterns. Less than three percent of the population hoards two-thirds of arable land. In view of acute levels of both hunger and crime, it is apparent this 'social apartheid' remains the single greatest threat to Brazil's 15 year-old 'democracy.'

A quarter of a million families, due to land reform under pressure from the MST, have gone from destitute subsistence peasants or farm labourers to small-scale producers. The MST now organises 2,600 such settlements on previously idle or under-productive estates. There, families decide whether to farm individual plots or collectively as members of a co-operative.

In the 16 years since its formation, the MST has grown into Brazil's only truly national social movement. Indeed, eleven thousand delegates attended the recent Congress. Both landless (those living in squatter camps) and ex-landless (now living in land-reform settlements) came from all over this immense sub-continent to Brasília.

There, inside one of the nurseries, a yellow polythene tent, Christiana, from the state of Goiás, attentively tends to some *sem terrinhos/as*, 'little landless.' "I lived in a squatter camp with my parents for four years. Finally, the government, under pressure from the grassroots, was forced to expropriate the disused estate. Now, where there were only a handful of individuals, there are hundreds of families, like mine, working on the land." Those lucky enough to gain title to land retain a commitment to give solidarity to those still awaiting a plot of land of their own. For three months a year, Christiana trains as a teacher at the MST's training school. Soon, she will become a qualified teacher, and hopes to educate children living on the camps resulting from MST land occupations.

Only 19, Christiana is also a member of the 11-member leadership board representing her state. Though the MST is made up of people of all ages, the majority are in their 20s or early 30s.

Due, in part to this youthful vitality and the confrontational tactics employed - including hundreds of occupations of idle estates and government offices - the MST has had an increasingly large impact on national politics. In the last five years or so, it has successfully put land reform and the 'agrarian question' in general, at the forefront of the nation's political agenda.

Though the MST remains non-violent, the military police and wealthy landowners alike increasingly respond to this escalating influence with violent repression. During the past fifteen years

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Manifesto to the Brazilian People

The Manifesto to the Brazilian People was elaborated during the MST's IV National Congress. It is a synthesis of the debates and represents a message to all organised sectors of Brazilian society. The Manifesto is as follows:

Dear *companheiros* and *companheiras*, throughout our immense and beloved Brazil.

We have been camped out in Brasília, with more than 11 thousand delegates from 23 states of the nation - men, women, children, youth and adults, from the rural areas, sharing sacrifices, joy and hopes. We have been reunited for the 4th National Congress of the *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra*, MST (Landless Rural Workers' Movement).

Our country is experiencing a grave crisis. But this crisis does not affect everyone. The wealthiest continue to earn a lot of money through exploitation. The large multinational corporations continue to send billions of dollars abroad. The banks have never earned as much money as now. But for those who survive from their sweat,

living conditions have become increasingly precarious; those who have work earn very little; young people lack quality schools; and universities have ceased to be no longer public and free. Many people have been forced to leave the rural heartland to live on the periphery of the large cities. There, they find misery and violence.

What is the cause of this?

It is true that our society has always been unjust. Like any capitalist society, the poor have always been exploited and humiliated. And the rich class, earning more and

more all the time, has always repressed the people and submitted it to the interests of international capital.

But since 1994, with the neo-liberal policies of Fernando Henrique Cardoso's government, the problems have become even more acute. This economic policy represents only the interests of the banks and of multinational companies. For these, the government guarantees high interest rates and financial help. Suffice to say; last year the government spent 64% of the national budget on servicing the interest on internal and external debt. Despite all the social problems, the government of the Brazilian elites has the nerve to send 50 billion dollars to the rich countries every year. That is why there is a lack of money for education health public transport popular housing and employment generation.

In agriculture the situation is graver still. The Cardoso government wants to "modernize" the rural areas stimulating large export-orientated

estates; handing control of the agricultural market over to the multinational corporations; and allowing agro-industries to control the storage of food products.

It has closed its centres of research and of technological development. Thus, scientific conquests, which ought to be the property of all humanity, are today monopolised by the multinationals that have their own research centres. Now, this same government is handing control of biotechnological research over to the multinationals. Caring only about increasing profit margins, they will be able to genetically modify plant life and foodstuffs, without any control, thereby endangering the environment and the health of farmers and consumers.

Most serious of all, favouring speculation and exploitation of small farmers and consumers, the government has ended regulated stocks of foodstuffs. These have also become monopolised by multinational agro-industries. The population is now a hostage to the profits of these groups.

In politics, every day sees the proliferation of news about corruption and embezzlement of the public funds and property. There is a sector, increasing in size all the time, of dominating classes that is enriching itself merely through the diversion of public money, through narco-trafficking, or contraband. These sectors are so powerful and influential that they include high court judges, commanders of the Military Police, deputies, senators, newspapers owners, bankers, military personnel... and it has even reached the ex-secretary of the Planalto (presidential palace). The latter, considered the right arm of the government, is alleged to belong to the group responsible for the theft of 169 million reais, destined to the construction of the São Paulo's Industrial Tribunal.

IS OUR COUNTRY A LOST CAUSE?

We don't believe so. However, the Brazilian people must rise up, organise itself, and take to the streets, in order to struggle for their historic rights. It is, indeed, possible to build another project for Brazil - a Popular Project that tends to the needs of the people. Radical changes are needed, however. We must prevent the banks, the multinationals and the thieves of the people from enriching themselves. The repayment of foreign debt must be suspended. The financial system and interest rates must be controlled. We must determine that banks use capital to finance production, and not speculation. Foreign debt must be renegotiated and the public budget prioritised towards education, health and agriculture. We should retake the reigns of economic policy, so that it be administered by Brazilians in favour of our people - thus, breaking the agreement with the IMF. Agrarian reform, associated with a new agricultural model, should be implemented. An agrarian reform that can guarantee income for farmers and a future for those that live in the rural areas.

With the resources that will no longer be sent to the banks and overseas, a national fund of

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The Current Situation in Brazil

By Scott Campbell

Over 1,000 people have been killed in the past ten years as a result of the land conflicts in Brazil. The legacy of violence perpetuated against the MST has continued with the September 14 murders of MST militants Silvio Rodrigues de Souza, 25 and Romildo de Souza, 35, from the state of Mato Grosso do Sul.

The men went to inspect a farm where there was an MST settlement and "were abducted at 10 am, tied to a tree, and forced to suffer every sort of humiliation before finally being executed at the end of the afternoon by gunshots."

The driver of the vehicle the men were abducted in was arrested and confessed. The assassinations were organized by the private security group COES Security Ltd., "which was organized by farmers of the region in order to act as a cover for their atrocities."

According to the MST, "it is the same agency which belongs to Mr. Claudio Penhavel, whose arrest warrant has been issued, and who is the husband of the large landowner Laura Costa Brito, niece of senator Ludio Coelho (PSDB-MS), one of the two largest landowners of the state. Over time, he has managed to accumulate more than

one hundred thousand hectares of public land."

Also, as of September 19, MST activists in 14 states have gone on hunger strike "to pressure the Brazilian government to fulfill its agreement with the Movement, including immediate settlement of over 100,000 families who live under plastic tents all over the country, as well as subsidized credit for small farmers to be able to produce food this year." Rather than meet the conditions they agreed to, the government has increased repression with assassinations, arrests, and other forms of intimidation.

The MST is requesting that letters be sent to President Cardoso, asking him to fulfill his government's agreement with the Movement. Letters can be sent to: Fernando Henrique Cardoso/ Presidente da República/ Palácio do Planalto/ 70150-900/ Brasília-DF/ Brazil. Or email: pr@planalto.com.br.

The MST is also in need of financial support, and tax deductible donations can be made through Global Exchange.

(see the end of "Land and Freedom" for Global Exchange's address and other important info, including MST listserve and MST website -- eds).



MST Land Occupation

photo from www.mstbrazil.org

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COINTELPRO: Then and Now

Part I: 1901-1963

By Greg Wells

On September 6, 1901, then President William McKinley was shot and killed by an Anarchist assassin named Leon Czolgosz. Czolgosz had attended a lecture on Anarchism in Cleveland, Ohio four months earlier by internationally acclaimed Anarchist, Emma Goldman. At the lecture, Czolgosz picked up several books and pamphlets recommended to him by Goldman. He had spent the past few months attending meetings of a Cleveland area Socialist group and was fed up with what he called "their lack of vision and dullness." His rugged looks and enthusiasm impressed Goldman and she took note of his face, though she assumed she'd never see it again.

At the time of the assassination, Goldman was in St. Louis, Missouri visiting with some friends. While out on the town catching up on errands she came across a news-

paper bearing the headline of: "Assassin of President McKinley an Anarchist. Confesses to having been incited by Emma Goldman. Woman Anarchist wanted." She also caught the image of the assassin and recognized him as the curious fellow from Cleveland. Knowing full well

that there was absolutely nothing that could be produced to incriminate herself she surrendered to the authorities in Chicago, Illinois on September 10, 1901.

After days of intense interrogation and accusations, the authorities were forced to release Goldman for failure to produce any substantiating evidence connecting her to the assassination. Leon, however, was not as fortunate and was executed by the state a short while later. It mattered not as the damage was already done upon the mental psyche of the American masses. From that point on, Anarchism began a rapid downhill spiral in the US that completely and thoroughly decimated its ranks for decades to come.

From 1901 - 1919, the US Government, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and all forms of state and local police set out on a mission to eradicate the growing ranks within the Anarchist and radical labor movements in the states. Suppression of journals and newspapers, frequent arrests and harassment and raids of meeting halls and union lodges sent a clear warning to all standing in opposition to the government that they would be stopped by any means necessary.

The formation of the No Conscription League in May 1916, which was formed to educate the masses against WWI and provide support and backing for those who did resist the draft, became a focal point of the government backlash. Goldman and her lifelong comrade Alexander Berkman were continually arrested for their role in the league and were eventually charged with violating the Selective Draft Act which set them up to be high priority in the mass deportation sweeps that were now under way.

Beginning in June of 1919, Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer with the full backing of the Department of Justice launched nationwide roundups of any alien radicals they could get their hands on. That month, Palmer announced

the creation of the General Intelligence Division (GID), which had as its chief objective the documentation of all radical elements in the US. The wide spread hysteria of the "Palmer raids" culminated with the December 21 departure of 249 radical immigrants out of the New York harbor aboard an old 1885 military boat called the Buford. Amongst those being deported for their radical beliefs were the prominent, Russian-born Anarchists Goldman and Berkman.

On the dock watching the ship sail out of the harbor for good were several prominent detectives with the FBI, as was a 24 year-old upstart by the name of J. Edgar Hoover. Hoover had spent the past few months tailing Goldman and Berkman via Palmer's GID and was starting to gain notoriety for his drive and no-nonsense attitude. Just three months prior, Hoover bottom-lined a mission to neutralize Black Nationalist leader Marcus Garvey. Through a long range campaign of infiltration of Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), the FBI — with Hoover's watchful eye — finally managed to railroad Garvey on a much

trumped up mail fraud case. Garvey, being an immigrant like Goldman and Berkman before him, was deported as an 'undesirable alien' in 1927. J. Edgar Hoover had officially put the finishing touches on the early chapters of what would become a fifty plus year reign of terror on popular resistance movements in the states.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 followed by the rise of the European Communist bloc and the 1949 Chinese Revolution ushered in an era of widespread panic and paranoia in the states that would shake our country to its very foundation. Everyone from the rank and file worker to major Hollywood stars was being charged with Cold War suspicion of sympathy with "the reds". It was this round 'em up and throw 'em out mentality that led to the first officially designated COINTELPRO activity against the Communist Party USA (CP, USA). It was masterminded by J. Edgar Hoover in a memorandum sent out to the bureau's Internal Security Section on August 28, 1956 with a mission of crippling the CP's growing influence over the masses.

The FBI's close surveillance of the CP had been underway as early as 1943 and had gained significant steam in the decade plus that following through the House Committee on Un-American Activities. At the heart of Hoover's program was discrediting individual members and creating factionalism within the CP through infiltration and sensationalized news accounts. By the mid-60's, the party was almost completely demobilized by the nearly 1,400 specific COINTELPRO actions carried out against it. The overall numbers of the CP shrank from 80,000 in 1946 to less than 2,800 in the late 60's. On October 12, 1970, then FBI assistant director William C. Sullivan went public stating that the CP posed no "significant threat to national security". By this time hundreds of other COINTELPRO actions were wreaking havoc on the Puerto Rican

Independence, Black Liberation, Civil Rights and the Native American movements.

Since the US won the Spanish-American War of 1899, the tiny Caribbean island of Puerto Rico has been subjected to over 100 years of US colonialism and terrorism. By the time the early 1920's rolled around, widespread popular dissent towards US policy had risen to such an explosive level that a Puerto Rican Nationalist party (NPPR) was established to utilize direct action as a means of achieving national sovereignty.

It didn't take long for the US government to explicitly order its four Puerto Rican FBI branches to squash the popular support of the NPPR. The island's police commander, Colonel Frank Riggs, announced that his men were in a war to the death with all Puerto Ricans. Militant Nationalist President Pedro Albizu Campos responded by proclaiming that "for every Nationalist killed, a continental American would die." When the police fired into a campus demonstration that left five dead on October 24, 1935, the NPPR replied by assassinating Riggs himself.

Realizing that the NPPR was gaining credibility in the face of the masses, the US government decided, as opposed to waging a bloody street warfare, to instead railroad Albizu and the higher-ups in the NPPR through charges of sedition. The stiff sentences handed out to Albizu and seven others ranged in severity from two to ten years. In February, 1937, after the last of Albizu's appeals had been denied, thousands of his supporters gathered in the city of Ponce for a parade in solidarity with their incarcerated leader. Armored police squads were in thick attendance and reacted to an isolated gunshot by opening fire on the masses. Twenty people were killed and over 150 others severely wounded. The devastation of the massacre and the long-range loss of Albizu sent the independentistas into a long regrouping process.

In the vacuum created by the absence of activity from the NPPR, a fellow by the name of Munoz Marin rose to power with the backing of his Partido Popular Democratico (PPD). Marin who made frequent visits to Washington, DC quickly became despised amongst the Puerto Rican masses. By the time the early 50's rolled around Albizu was out of prison and was launching the most aggressive attacks on the US yet.

On October 30, 1950, two thousand nationalists launched major offenses throughout the island and managed to seize and control several smaller inland towns. Munoz himself narrowly escaped death as a major shoot out occurred in the governor's residence that was only saved from sure doom with major reinforcements from the US military stationed in San Juan.

Two short days later two New York, nationalists went to DC and attempted to assassinate then President Truman. The attempt ended in death to one of the would-be assassins and a cop

stationed at Truman's temporary residence; Albizu once again was landed in prison in connection to the uprising.

After one last major attack on the House of Representatives on March 4, 1954 that wounded five congressmen, the NPPR began to see its final demise. Factionalism and infighting with highly probable FBI infiltration splintered the resistance movement into a series of unconnected smaller cells that held virtually none of the fire and commitment of the old NPPR. Finally near the end of the decade, the Movimiento por Independencia Puertorriqueno (MPIPR) headed by the Marxist Juan Mari Brás emerged with former NPPR members to carry on the struggle of decades past. It was at this juncture on August 5, 1960 that Hoover and the FBI implemented a formal COINTELPRO with the primary goal of strengthening the US grip on the nation by destroying the entire left opposition on the island.

Through the insertion of carefully selected informants within the MPIPR and a series of falsified news stories championing the successful bond with the US and Puerto Rico, the movement suffered psychologically and physically. In 1963, the operations were upped to include censorship of pro-independence radio programs and inflammatory cartoons in local papers discrediting popular MPIPR leader Mari Brás. By the late 1960's, the bureau began drumming up divisiveness between the then fledgling CPUSA and the Puerto Rican Independence movement.

During the 70's and 80's, years after the secret COINTELPRO files were open, activity only escalated in the colony. In 1988, pro-independence activist Alfredo Lopez went on record saying: "Over the past fifteen years, 170 attacks,

beatings, shootings and bombings of independence organizations have been documented." Although many of these terroristic activities were claimed to have been carried out by right-wingers, not a single arrest was made in any of the cases.

Today, well over a hundred years since the initial colonization of the proud and defiant people of Puerto Rico, popular resistance on the island and in large Puertorriquano communities in the states is as

strong as ever, proving that the government may have the capacity to temporarily sidetrack the masses, but can never crush the spirit they possess.

(Part II will be in issue 3 of ONWARD.)



Emma Goldman's mug shot



Pedro Albizu Campos shortly before going to prison for 10 years on charges of sedition.

Warden Rejects Anarchist Newspapers

By Rob Augman

After complying as well as possible to strict and absurd postal regulations when sending copies of *ONWARD* to prisoners across the country, vague guidelines in a Tennessee prison have upheld a closed-door policy that aims to censor radical political literature. A form letter from Fred Raney, Warden of the Northwest Correctional Complex in Tiptonville, Tennessee, stated that "The mail is being rejected for the following reason: Anarchism."

Shortly after we received the letter from Raney, a copy of a letter from Harold Thompson, whose newspaper had been rejected, to Jim Rose, Assistant Commissioner of Operations, came in the mail. After stating that this is his daily censorship appeal the letter continues by stating "I am appealing this mail rejection as I believe it amounts to nothing more than a deliberate violation of my First Amendment United States Constitutional Right..." He continues, "Anarchism"

is a legitimate alternative political ideology... Such acts of censorship serve only to preclude the free exchange of ideas within a democracy."

In a letter we received from Harold, he goes into detail about the current situation pertaining to mail confiscations, "Mail confiscations of Anarchist materials is becoming an increasingly frequent problem for all anarchist prisoners in this era of repression in the gulags... sometimes materials make it through prison mail rooms and other times they are summarily rejected, even copies of the same publication, because prisonrats working in gulag mail rooms often use their own prejudices in determining what a prisoner is permitted to receive."

ONWARD isn't the only publication confiscated by Raney. The *Insurgent*, an Anarchist newspaper from Eugene, Oregon, has also been confiscated. And mail from APLAN, Anarchist Prison Legal Aid Network, (see page 20) has

been rejected as well. Even personal letters have been confiscated. But Harold remains strong and continues to fight, inside and out of the legal system, for freedom of information and even furthermore for "what we know in our hearts is right and against the monsters of the earth!"

Write Harold to keep him updated on what's happening on the outside as well as on a personal note. Although his personal mail is also sometimes confiscated, he wishes for correspondence. Write him at: Harold H. Thompson #93992 Northwest Correctional Complex Route 1, Box 660 Tiptonville, TN 38079 USA.

He also has a support campaign: Friends of Harold H. Thompson PO Box 375 Knaphill, Woking, Surrey, GU21 2XL, England or email them at catherine.kay@btinternet.com

He has written a booklet of Anarchist poetry and prison writings that you can get from his support campaign.



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NEWS BRIEFS

Greek Anarchists Firebomb Police Station

ATHENS, Greece - Two people on a motorcycle tossed gasoline bombs at a suburban Greek police station Monday, September 4th to protest the government's new anti-terrorism measures - including expanded cooperation with US officials.

Fires lit by the three bombs caused minor damage but no injuries, police said.

A group claiming to represent all Greek Anarchist groups claimed responsibility for the attack at the station in Papagou, about three miles northeast of central Athens. In an anonymous call to an Athens newspaper, the group said the attack was "the welcome for the new terrorist law," police said. It was also "in support to all the imprisoned Anarchist fighters."

On Sunday, a time bomb damaged a British car dealership in Athens but caused no injuries. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the blast and it was unclear whether the two attacks were linked.

Greece's public order minister, Mihalios Chrisohoidis, plans to visit Washington to sign a counter-terrorism pact, which would allow for a greater exchange of information and expertise. The accord has touched off protests in Greece, where many people bitterly oppose any US influence.

Greek authorities also have promised a range of new 'anti-terrorist' measures, including possible witness protection programs. Greece is home to the elusive November 17 organization, which has claimed responsibility for 22 assassinations since 1975 - including four Americans and a US Embassy employee. In June, the group killed British military attaché Brig. Stephen Saunders, saying it was in revenge for NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia last year.

French Anti-Globalization Activist Jailed for Attack on McDonald's

MILLAU, France - Jose Bove, activist in France's burgeoning protest movement against globalization and junk food, was given a 3 month jail sentence on September 13 for leading an attack on a McDonald's restaurant in August last year.

The judge decided the prosecution's request at the trial earlier this year for a one month term, plus nine months suspended, was insufficient for an act of criminal vandalism that cost the fast-food chain an estimated 720,000 francs (\$95,000 dollars) and felt the tougher sentence was needed to "teach Bove a lesson."

Eight co-defendants, members of Bove's Peasant Confederation who the prosecutor argued were following his instructions when they ransacked the half-built restaurant, were given short suspended jail terms and small fines.

After the verdict was announced, Bove vowed to appeal and continue to fight against blind market forces.

"Prison doesn't worry me. I've been there before and I'll go back if I have to. Justice does not emerge enhanced from this judgment. They obviously understood nothing of our movement," he said.

Over 400 environmentalists and other supporters gathered in Millau to show their support of Bove and booed when the verdict was announced. "We are all Boves," they shouted when he emerged from the courthouse.

Bove, 47, described the attack on the McDonald's as a symbolic act designed to draw attention to the injustices of the world trading system. The attack - chosen as an emblem of American cultural and gastronomic expansionism - came after the US imposed trade sanctions on European foodstuffs.

Calling as witnesses a number of well-known campaigners against globalization, Bove argued that the act had to be seen in the context of the worsening plight of small farmers like himself against the inroads of big business.

The prosecutor linked the attack to the bombing by Breton separatists of a McDonald's in May in which a woman died, arguing that Bove had indirectly set the fast-food chain up as a legitimate target.

Yugoslav Rebellion...

continued from page 3

unable to publish anything or to organize publicly. Although it was against many anarchists beliefs, some felt that there would be more space to work under Kostunica than under Milosevic. Some voted, I did not.

The night after the elections was full of different news. All political parties were giving different results: the federal electoral commission didn't give any official results but it was obvious, not only from opposition sources but also from some SPS officials' statements, that DOS had won by a great majority. Milosevic's party was in total confusion. During the night and next day they were announcing different results. Their webpage stated that Kostunica won but then they revoked that. After three days of huge opposition demonstrations in Belgrade, DOS proclaimed the victory of Kostunica in the first round of elections, claiming that he won over 50% of the votes. The next day, the federal electoral commission, which was under total control of Milosevic, announced new results, claiming that a new round of presidential elections was necessary, because none of the candidates won more than 50% of the votes. Everybody could see that Milosevic lost the election and that he was now trying to keep his power by all means. The opposition proposed a General Strike to resist Milosevic and it was accepted by most of the people. On October 2nd it began.

One of the organizations that attracted many young people was "Otpor" (Resistance). Due to their logo (a clenched fist) and because they don't officially have a leader many anarchists inquire about this organization. But Otpor is actually a nationalistic, neo-liberal organization led by a few "organizers"-de facto leaders with all the power who are funded by Western countries. And a great number of young people joined them because for the last two years they were the most visible resistance to the Milosevic regime.

We supported the strike because we thought and still think that removing Milosevic from power was the top priority and that ordinary people will benefit. The first day of the strike all of Serbia stopped. All the cities in Serbia except Belgrade were virtually at a standstill. Miners from the country's largest coal mine began their

strike one day before the General Strike was announced, and they were keeping it up. Universities and high schools also started striking. The best sign that the strike was effective was Milosevic's appearances on national television, where he accused demonstrators and strikers of being paid by NATO to destroy FRY from the inside. Several local departments of Serbian Radio-Television (RTS) stopped transmitting the Milosevic-slanted programming from the national RTS and began informing people about the real situation in Yugoslavia. The strike was followed by blockades of major streets in Belgrade and highways all around Serbia.

On the second day the strike continued. More and more companies started striking and Serbia

was even closer to a total stand-still. Belgrade was blockaded for more than 6 hours and the main highway running through it was blocked for more than 2 hours. In some parts of the city the police started beating people up. For us it was a sign that Milosevic was aware that his days were numbered and that he would have to use brutal force to stay in power. Until the General Strike the police forces were the most loyal institution in Milosevic's system, but during the second day of the General Strike, police in some areas didn't follow orders to attack people, which gave us hope that possibly the police would soon join us. More than 7,000 coal miners on their third day of strike were faced by 2,000 riot police, and some of them were injured in the violence. But because of the support by people from the nearby city of Lazarevac they kept their strike



Protestors seized this bulldozer and used it in entering Parliament

trophy. A few police cars were destroyed as well. Protestors then proceeded to the RTS headquarters, which they occupied, burned, and destroyed. The general manager of RTS was almost killed by



Hundreds of thousands of Yugoslavians took part in the rebellion

angry demonstrators. All TV stations and other media houses were taken over by their employees. National television for the first time in 10 years started talking against Milosevic and soon it was all over. The electoral commission announced that they made an error and that the opposition candidate won. Milosevic appeared on television and admitted that he lost.

on. As anarchists, we were mostly active in the student part of the protest and we had numerous conflicts with the "organizers" of Otpor because they were totally media-hungry and wannabe leaders without any idea of how to lead a protest. Also they had problems with us flying our red and black flag but since we were loud and we were right, other demonstrators supported us and we kept our flag high and waving. We understood that without any ideas we would not be able to do anything, so we agreed to help organize student protests by giving useful advice to "organizers" and by connecting them with independent syndicates in Serbia. We had contacts with independent syndicates in some media houses that were under control of Milosevic. We understood that if the people wanted to take over the media, the only way to accomplish that would be by workers from media taking over their workplaces. So we made good contacts with syndicates and connected them with protestors.

The fourth day was a crucial one for Milosevic. From the start you could smell in the air that something enormous was about to happen. It was obvious that people had had enough of Milosevic and his regime. People started gathering on the square in front of the philosophical university around 11am. Soon it was impossible to tell how many people were gathered; by some estimates there were 2 million people on the streets of Belgrade, including people who came from other cities. By 3pm, the protest march started. Through one of the biggest streets of Belgrade, a bulldozer was coming. It was obvious that something big was going to happen. Protestors from the city of Cacak were the most militant during the protest; they had brought the bulldozer. The people marched to Parliament, which they entered by force and burned. Police released tear gas but for the first time people fought back! Some police started hitting demonstrators but the demonstrators hit police back and then a number of police gave up and joined the people. A lot of police were injured and their uniforms and helmets were taken from them like

Florida IndyMedia Growing!

By Rob Augman

Out of the growing activism that Florida has produced within the last few years comes two more excellent additions. Two new infoshops, Orlando's Stone Soup Collective and St. Petersburg's George Orwell Resource Center are to open their doors this October. Their missions are similar: to provide a space and resources for grassroots community organizing. Inspired very much by Gainesville's own infoshop, the Civic Media Center, the two new infoshops are designed not as bookstores but as lending libraries. The lending library model is one that not only supplies excellent materials but also presents a new working model, in contrast with capitalism's store, of how products can be used, collectively and cooperatively, in the community. This type of structure is deeply based in Anarchist theory whereas property is not private but available for use for whoever desires it.

The infoshop's plan not only to be alternative libraries but also a place for the community to organize itself, and to hold political, cultural, and social events. Spaces such as these have been common around the world for many years but with the continuing growth of market economies communities are forced to sacrifice their green-spaces, community centers, and parks to be replaced with Starbucks and similar corporate giants that claim to be that common space

for the community. But as much as the mainstream press aims to further commodify our lives and corporatize our communities and ourselves we continue to push back. We uncover the independent press, the power of ordinary people to develop better ways to communicate, and on a larger scale, to reclaim our potential and turn it into a force that aims to transform society into one based on direct participation, voluntary cooperation, mutual aid, solidarity, freedom, and non-hierarchy.

Both, the Stone Soup Collective and the George Orwell Resource Center, as well as the Civic Media Center, are always looking for new volunteers, new ideas, financial contributions, and new faces. Go check them out!

Stone Soup Collective

PO Box 720418 Orlando, FL 32872
us@stonesoupcollective.org
www.stonesoupcollective.org

George Orwell Resource Center

PO Box 10789 St. Petersburg, FL 33733
Phone: (727) 723-2612

Fax: (877) 430-1398

GeorgeOrwellRC@listbot.com

Civic Media Center

1021 W. University, Ave. Gainesville, FL 32601
(352) 373-0010

www.gator.net/~cmc



What did this General Strike show? It showed that the concept of the General Strike is not as outdated as some anarchists presented it. It showed that when people come together with one goal (removing Milosevic from power in this case), when they believe in solidarity and mutual aid, any goal is reachable. Finally it showed that workers are still and will continue to be a driving force for any revolutionary change in society, that without support by coal miners and workers from Cacak, nothing would have happened on the last day of protest. There is no doubt that our society took a step towards freedom but, from our anarchist perspective, it is only one and a very small step. To achieve our goal of a free society without illegitimate authorities, classes and exploitation we'll have to fight even harder, but eventually our idea of a truly free world will prevail!

Rata is an anarchist activist and organizer in Yugoslavia. You can contact him at rata@beotel.yu

We Win?

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were a big success, however, days and weeks later many who participated feel a sense of fear and defeat. Why is this? Tactically, we succeeded in what we planned to do. We did not kid ourselves into thinking we could 'shut down' the Republican Convention, our intention was to cause as much disruption to 'business as usual' and to the convention itself. We accomplished this despite obvious police infiltration and a police raid on a warehouse where puppets and other props were being made a half hour before the actions were set to begin.

One of the most disturbing elements of the sense of defeat many activists experienced is that this sense was so heavily influenced by the actions of the state and the coverage of events by the corporate media. Anyone who has followed any discussion of the RNC protests knows that many of the activists arrested were given extreme and almost unprecedented charges and bails for this kind of political protest. The media coverage was also horrendous. However, none of this should be a surprise; the State can be even more vicious than it was this August if it feels it must and can generally count on support from the corporate media. The State risks losing legitimacy with the middle class if its repression is too obvious, but this can be avoided with careful preparation. In Philadelphia, the State had learned its lessons from actions in Seattle and Washington, DC and the media was only too eager to lend its support to repression.

We too must learn lessons, but we must be sure they are the right ones. One crucial lesson is that our tactics and structures do work! In spite of preemptive police raids, our actions basically succeeded. However the fact that we were mauled so badly in the aftermath shows that our long-term strategy was lacking.

One vital lesson is that we must not rely exclusively on the mainstream media to communicate our message. No one in our movement is likely to disagree with this in principle, however when it comes down to practical work, outreach often gets sidelined in favor of action and preparations for action. We failed to get the word out about what we were doing and who we were to the poor/working class communities and communities of color. The criminal justice system was deliberately chosen as the focus of August 1st's actions in order to bring attention to the oppression poor people and people of color face right here in the USA. In the mass actions in Seattle and DC, the poor and people of color were present in notably small numbers and we hoped to change this in Philly. Thanks to the excellent organizing of the August 1st coalition in New York city and activists of color from Philly, in comparison, many more people of color did attend the actions and provided invaluable leadership. Unfortunately, this fact and our issues in general did not get out in the media. The only way that we could have gotten our word out would have been to do direct outreach to community groups, slow and difficult work that simply didn't happen in the flurry of logistical preparation, fundraising and recruiting.

Many activists were dismayed by the hateful treatment we received in the media. No 'media strategy' could have prevented this. Media strategies that work for stunts like banner-drops will not work for aggressive mass-actions which are much more threatening to the State. Small-scale media oriented events like banner-drops are primarily useful for groups trying to gain leverage for a single-issue campaign. Mass actions are best at changing the consciousness of their participants and showing the rest of the world the power that ordinary people can wield when we are organized and willing to contest the power of the State. Activists relying on getting our message out in the media are susceptible to divisiveness such as blaming 'bad' actions on 'troublemakers' and other such nonsense, statements like this actually occurred in spite of strenuous efforts to discourage division.

Sadly, a large number of activists really thought that we would be seen as cute, irreverent and at worst, mischievous. This attitude comes out of a background of privilege. A better grounding in the struggles of the poor, working classes and people of color would have better prepared activists to being demonized as the classic 'Other' that mainstream middle-class society can focus all their repressed frustration and self-hatred.

If nothing else, experiences like planning and carrying out the protests provided valuable experience in large-scale organizing. I'm deeply



photo from www.philly.indymedia.org

concerned though, that many will learn the wrong lesson in organizing. I've already heard some folks question the use of any media work because the media coverage will never be any good. Others have questioned the use of large structures like spokescouncils because they can be infiltrated. Attitudes like this are dangerous because they can lead from doing flawed work to doing no real work at all. There is always a strong tendency in Anarchist movements (in the US anyway) to splinter into small groups with only haphazard connections. Furthermore there is frequently a powerful myth of 'spontaneous insurrection' that will bring about radical change. We should recognize the vital and creative forces that lie in spontaneous revolt but only as it complements other organizing. However, many Anarchists and other activists when confronted with the painful and tedious realities of long-term grass-roots work, rationalize that building broad-based organizations capable of carrying out long-term work are unnecessary or even lead automatically to new hierarchies. They rely instead on small-scale short-lived groups that remain limited to mostly white middle-class subcultures or similar exclusive groupings. Not surprisingly, a movement based on this type of organization fails to bring in the wide cross-section of people that is necessary to change social consciousness and fight oppression at all levels: in the workplace, in communities and in our daily relationships.

Possibly the most vital lesson is that the struggle is not over just because the fun and excitement are over. At the time of this writing, close to forty activists face felony charges for their role in the protests. Most people facing misdemeanor charges have at least four charges; some have ten or more. Many of these charges are laughably ludicrous, some activists were charged with assaulting police after being assaulted by police (a common cop routine) others were arrested and charged with felony conspiracy charges because they were speaking on cell phones. Be assured though that the District Attorney intends to push for prosecution on even the most ridiculous charges. The first phases of trials begin in mid-September and will continue for weeks and possibly months. Money is needed for legal costs and more important public pressure is needed to support defendants.

In the anti-WTO protests in Seattle, a popular piece of graffiti said simply "we are winning." But what was this victory? We didn't actually 'shut down' the WTO, the meetings were seriously delayed on only one day. We probably helped bring up contradictions internal to the WTO between rich countries and poor countries but this could have easily happened anyway. The real victory was giving ourselves and the world a glimpse of what radical, uncompromising, large-scale organizing can do. The desire to repeat this success is strong but we must realize that massive actions every couple of months is not sustainable. We must take the uncompromising spirit of Seattle, DC, Philly etc. into all spheres of capitalist life. Whether we can ever say the protests in Philly were a 'success' depends in large part on the organizing we do NOW. Can we keep our people out of prison? Can we continue to expand a radical critique of capitalism and its system of repression so that our protests 'make sense' to others? These questions remain to be answered.

Scott is an activist from Philadelphia. Amongst other things, he was involved with PDAG (Philadelphia Direct Action Group) during the Republican National Convention protests. You can contact him through the Onward Collective at theonwardcollective@hotmail.com

Defend the RNC 420!

The city of Philadelphia has taken a major step forward in a larger campaign by the State to repress rising dissent. On August 1st, several thousand activists took over the streets of downtown Philadelphia during the Republican National Convention to protest the 'criminal injustice' system. Four hundred and twenty were arrested mostly for non-violent actions such as blocking a road. Unlike previous non-violent direct actions, the Philadelphia District Attorney is pursuing maximum charges against all who were arrested. The DA's office has, in most cases, heaped on charges in almost unprecedented number and severity. The DA is pursuing charges even where there is practically no case. In a raid a half hour before protests were set to begin, the police besieged a warehouse where puppets were being constructed, claiming to look for 'implements of crime;' of course, nothing was found. After several hours of stand-off, the police busted in and arrested everyone inside, about eighty people, for charges like 'obstructing the highway,' though these activists never left the building.

Bails for arrested activists were set at outrageous levels. In one case, an activist charged with misdemeanors had bail set at \$1 million! As insane as this was, everyone's bail was excessive; most were at least \$10,000 and many in the \$200,000 range. While judges reduced bails later, the excessive bails made it extremely difficult to begin defense efforts.

Treatment in jail was atrocious. People with medical needs were denied treatment. All prisoners were denied or received slowly basic needs like food and water. Many prisoners were beaten and terrorized. Clearly the Philadelphia government is sending a message: effective dissent will not be tolerated.

Over thirty people are facing felony charges. A number of these activists are charged with violence against police officers. The state hopes to isolate these defendants as 'violent' and 'bad' protesters. The R2K support network adamantly refuses to fall for this trap. We are united in supporting ALL activists arrested. We stress that many of these supposed 'assault on police' charges are actually covering up for the frequently violent attacks cops carried out on the same protesters later charged with assault.

It is vital that activists everywhere understand Philadelphia's new standard of repression must not be allowed to pass.

Here are some ways you can help:

Contact the mayor and demand the charges be dropped:
Mayor John Street
City Hall
Philadelphia PA 19101
(215) 686-2181

Legal battles are expensive, please donate money. Please make checks to "ISMCH" and send to:
Philadelphia Direct Action Group
PO Box 40683
Philadelphia, PA 19107-0683

Online donations can be made at:
http://www.givingcapital.com/goto/campaign_2651_1_f

Get the word out in your community. Contact the Philly Direct Action Group for more information.

NEWS BRIEFS

Protesters Shut Down World Economic Forum

MELBOURNE, Australia - Over 10,000 protesters shut down the World Economic Forum (WEF) Asia Pacific Economic Summit meeting in Melbourne, Australia on September 11. The S11 umbrella group, comprised of over 50 student, union, and environmental organizations, shut down the meeting and stopped at least 200 of the 850 delegates, and several media representatives, from entering the casino where the meetings were taking place. Protesters blocked off at least 6 entrances to the Crown Casino, which spans three city blocks. Police responded by charging into lines of protesters with their batons, but were largely unable to break up the blockades on the first day. At one point, protestors blocked the car of Western Australian Premier Richard Court, slashing the tires and spraypainting slogans on it. Court was stuck for at least an hour, until police were able to clear away protesters and the car continued driving on flat tires. When it became clear that entry by road was futile, police provided escorts to delegates who were ferried by boat along the Yarra River to the adjacent casino. Others arrived and left by helicopter.

The demonstration caused about \$10 million in lost revenue to the casino. Over the three days of protests, 12 were arrested and over 200 injured including broken ribs, hands and reports of police batons being thrust into stomachs, breasts and genitals, as well as one person run over by an unmarked police car and another person had three teeth knocked out. Some demonstrators were dragged by the hair. Police were more violent on the following two days of protests, and a special police force was brought in to help 'control' the protests. In addition to blocking many of the delegates, the protests forced plans to bring 100 buses of schoolchildren to hear Bill Gates of Microsoft speak to be abandoned. Prime Minister John Howard, who had to arrive by boat due to the blockades, said that "Australia's free trade agenda was in the interests of poor countries and that a reduction in trade barriers would do much for Third World poverty."

For more information, see:

<http://www.antimedia.net/s11awol>

<http://www.s11.org>

<http://melbourne.indymedia.org>

Anti-Navy Protesters Detained on Vieques

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico - The Navy detained 65 protesters Sunday, October 1, near a former weapons depot on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, part of a day of anti-military demonstrations. The protesters entered the base by crawling under a fence before dawn and now face trespassing charges.

Later in the day, thousands marched to demand that the military abandon the Vieques training ground it has used since the 1940s. The Navy controls about 70% of the island. Authorities have arrested more than 600 protesters since May; more than 400 await trial on trespassing charges. Protesters occupied the bombing range to thwart further exercises until US marshals forcibly removed them May 4.

The military exercises have endangered residents, damaged the environment and stunted the island's economy. The Navy claims the training is necessary to national defense.

President Clinton promised the Navy would abandon the western weapons depot and leave Vieques completely in May, 2003 if the island's 9,400 residents vote in a referendum to expel it in 2002.

The march culminated events that began with a demonstration in front of the White House on Sept. 22, when hundreds of people chanted for the Navy to leave the island. US Park Police arrested and cited 78 protesters for breaking a federal regulation prohibiting stationary demonstrations in front of the White House. The violation carries fines up to \$50.

(see ONWARD #1 for background information on the Vieques struggle. Check out www.viequeslibre.org for up-to-date info.)

Zapatista Struggle...

continued from page 1

zens held multiple demonstrations and engaged in mass unrest demanding that both the government and the EZLN agree to a cease-fire. After 12 days of attacks and counter-attacks, demonstrators succeeded in convincing the government to propose the cease-fire, and the suffering EZLN accepted — knowing it was probably their only way to gain civil society's support.

After the initial cease-fire, the EZLN realized if they were not going to win their war militarily, they would have to depend on continued support from the national and international civil societies to keep their demands urgent and pressure on the government persistent. Only with the combination of internal strength and cohesion, and both national and international vigilance, could the geographically-isolated, militarily-surrounded Zapatistas hope to spare themselves from the rural massacres that plagued their Guatemalan neighbors for decades — or even begin to hope that their demands would not dissipate into the jungle air, but instead become known, accepted demands for change in the way Mexicans run their society and government. To insure that their demands were known and that (inter)national focus remained on them, the Zapatistas, through spokesman Subcommander Marcos, issued periodic communiques (by way of newspapers, magazines, and — some would

argue most importantly — extensive use of the internet) to the world at large, describing their current situation and the challenges they faced in achieving their demands. They also held frequent national and international conferences in Chiapas (such as the National Democratic Convention of August 1994 attended by over six thousand people, and many subsequent conferences under many other names) in order to foster mutually beneficial relationships between the insurgents and their civilian supporters, and to keep each other informed of

their respective struggles and successes. Such national and international networking has led to a vast expansion of the Zapatista movement, as, in the six years since its emergence, the movement has gone from a group of mainly indigenous Chiapanecan peasants into a nation- and worldwide coalition of labor, human rights, environmental justice, indigenous rights, student rights groups and more, all working to achieve the demands that the EZLN initially called for on January 1, 1994, both in Chiapas and around the world.

At the time of this writing (September 2000), the Zapatista movement and coalition have branched out in many directions, appearing in essentially every plane of resistance to globalization. Zapatista supporters have spread the word of the movement in newspapers, university courses, song lyrics, banners and web-pages spanning the globe. They have written books, held concerts, filmed documentaries and raised such a ruckus that European government commissions and UN officials — such as Mary Robinson, the High Commissioner for Human Rights — have made repeated visits to Chiapas, denouncing Mexico's treatment of its citizens and demanding immediate improvement. Zapatista supporters have formed part of the ever-more-powerful and creative protest forces, participating in the mobilizations in Seattle, DC, LA, Melbourne and Prague. Through all those mediums, on those world stages, Zapatista supporters and fellow activists continue to demand the abolition of the neoliberal scheme of imperialist economic plundering, the rescue of our environment, the death of racism and the rebirth of respect for (almost) all peoples and their chosen ways of life. They inform the elite sponsors of globalization that not everyone will whore themselves to the nightmare that is capitalist "modernization," for the Zapatistas and their dream are here to stay. Unfortunately, however, their

current reality is still far from their dream.

In the jungles and mountains of Chiapas, where the core group of Zapatistas remain ever more encircled and penetrated by military troops, the resistance to globalization is perhaps more palpable than anywhere else in the world. But such resistance is found not in the chants of protestors or the grunts of puppy-piles, but rather in the profound silence that echoes through the hills (and what remains of the forests) of the war-torn state. The Zapatistas are silent. It is a tactic they have used before, when the farces of democracy babbled away on the stages of politics in early-mid 1998, making promise after promise — as they have always done — that now was the time democracy was arriving in Mexico; that now was the time justice would be served. It didn't then, and it hasn't yet. Such a revelation baffles many Mexican politicians, who claim that the fact that an opposition party candidate (i.e., a candidate from a party other than the PRI, the Party of the Institutionalized Revolution, which dominated Mexican politics for the past 71 years) finally won the Presidency on July 2 demonstrates that democracy has been achieved in Mexico — so the Zapatistas should stop bitching already; they got what they wanted. Those baffled politicians have been especially frustrated since August 20, when an opposition party candidate won as governor of Chiapas. They were certain then that the Zapatistas had to agree to

negotiate, as democracy had illuminated even the dark chasms of Chiapanecan politics. Yet a month later, the Zapatistas still offer only silence.

There are a few politicians in Mexico who get it. They understand that just because the new President has offered to confine the more than 70,000 regular military troops currently patrolling and harassing Chiapanecos (including many Zapatistas) to their barracks, perhaps as soon as December 1, that still leaves until December 1 for his rhetoric to turn into reality. They understand that for all President-elect Vicente Fox's declarations that he will "end the Chiapas conflict in 15 minutes," his neo-liberal economic plans for Mexico can do nothing more than deepen the poverty of the Zapatistas and millions of other Mexicans, therefore stretching those 15 minutes into perhaps 15 more years. They understand that the Zapatistas already negotiated with the government back in 1996, when both the Zapatistas and the government signed the San Andres Accords, but the government has blatantly ignored its part of the bargain. They understand that until those accords, ostensibly formulated:

"1) To urge a profound transformation of the state, as well as of the political, social, cultural, and economic relationships with the indigenous peoples, which satisfies their demands for justice, [and]

2) To urge the emplacement of an all-inclusive new social agreement, based on the understanding of the fundamental plurality of Mexican society and on the contribution that the indigenous people can make to national unity, beginning with the constitutional acknowledgement of their rights, and in particular, to their right to self-determination and autonomy,"¹ are implemented, the EZLN will continue the suspension of their dialogue/negotiation with the government, initiated over 4 years ago, in September 1996. One of those politicians is Marco Antonio Bernal, ex-Commissioner for Peace in Chiapas, who said on August 31 of this year that he believes that "the EZLN can't respond to what [the government] is proposing to them [to re-start negotiations] because the conditions aren't there; there is work to be done and the San Andres Accords have to get to Congress"² before any response will be made. As Ricardo Robles O., writer for the Mexico City-based *La Jornada* newspaper writes, "Many Zapatista declarations have spoken and there is much to listen to if one



The Conquistador Mazariegos falls and the Zapatistas are born, 500 years of resistance march, October 12, 1992

Slavery is Alive and Well in Amerikkka Today

By Ali Khalid Abdullah

Slavery is alive and well in Amerikkka today. It is thriving under a new name, a new face, a new approach and is widely accepted under the untrained eye of the masses. This new slavery is taking place in today's prisons across Amerikkka. Prisoners are working at slave labor for slave wages and in some cases, no wages at all, like in the state of Texas, where prisoners work the fields from sun up to sun down, while behind the scenes, someone is profiting. How can so-called "society" justify allowing prisons to operate slave labor camps where men and women work in prison factories, laundries and kitchens for 50, 80 cents or if you're lucky, one dollar per day? And those who do make the pathetic wages must use it to buy their own aspirin, cough medicine and other such medicines, as well as stamps, paper, envelopes etc.

Whoever asks the question: "Where does the money go from the various products prisoners make in these factories?" "Who gets the real money?" It should be painfully and obviously clear that someone of political power is getting their pockets greased off the backs of prisoners, just as slaveholders and politicians of the past were getting their pockets fat off dehumanizing slavery.

Here in Michigan, there are measures to see to it that prisoners continue to be slaves by being forced to work or receive a misconduct report (which can cause the prisoner to languish in prison longer than their minimum date when they go before the parole board—which is very particularly charged), or be denied other privileges.

Prisoners in Michigan and 9 other states are

wants to know [what the Zapatistas think].... The necessary changes, the real ones, will come only if everyone puts them together, and the Zapatistas have said that in every tone...."³

Perhaps if those politicians had listened to just one tone of Zapatista declarations they would know the militarization and paramilitarization of Chiapas have become overwhelming, leading many Chiapanecos to abstain from voting in fear of para- or military repercussions (so much for representative democracy), and many others to either be driven or flee from their homes to escape paramilitary violence. The massacre of 43 indigenous women and children in the small northern Chiapas hamlet of Acteal in December 1997 is only the worst example of government-trained paramilitary violence; other massacres and multiple examples of paramilitary takeovers of Chiapanecan towns abound. In a twisted response to the events in Chiapas, my Mexican friends call the capital city of Chiapas, San Cristobal de las Casas, "San Cris-Bosnia." And with the lines of battle between Liberation Theology-based Catholic and Protestant Zapatistas, on one side, and the mainly Catholic PRI-supporters (who frequently make up the PRI-sponsored paramilitary forces), on the other, often drawn along religious lines, the allusion to Bosnia is not much of a stretch. The religious conflicts in Chiapas are certainly not minimal; nonetheless, the deepest of problems in the state are undoubtedly the historic racism and imperialist plunder that continues to devastate nearly all the indigenous of Chiapas, regardless of their religion. Hence, the Zapatista silence. Until those making the political and economic decisions in Mexico respond to Zapatista demands of accountability and enforcement of basic human rights; until the Accords of San Andres are implemented and the para- and military presence in Chiapas is shrunk to a minute fraction of its current status, there will be no negotiation.

But there may be hope. Although it is undoubtedly false that "democracy has already been achieved" in Mexico, it is true that the deposing of the PRI as Mexico's ruling party reveals the many cracks in Mexico's political structure and, most importantly, in its political platform. Mexicans are demanding a change not only in who runs Mexican politics and how they are run, but also in what those politics are about and how they serve the people. And there is a chance that the new politicians — especially Pablo Salazar Mendeguchia, the new governor of Chiapas — may actually work to advance Zapatista demands. Salazar, according to *La Jornada* commentator Julio Hernandez Lopez, "is another of the PRI-members whose disgust with the intolerance and the political frivolity of [Ernesto Zedillo, President of Mexico from 1994 – present] caused him

already being charged \$3 to have medical treatment. For those not incarcerated, they may say that \$3 for medical care is no big deal, but in prison, \$3 is a lot. However, it goes beyond the money; what it is really about is the state finding ways to continue their repressive acts.

Across the country, higher education has all but vanished, as well as many vocational programs. This is another way of keeping a prisoner educationally deprived and unable to adequately compete for a livable job/wage, which means and almost insures that the uneducated prisoner will return to some economic "crime" to sustain themselves, or cause the prisoner to lose all hope and find solace in drugs. Thus creating the condition for returning to prison which creates more money for the state and the Department of Corrections.

Our communities must demand and begin to work with those who are in these prisons (death kkkamps) so that they are afforded the necessary tools, counseling and educational programs so that we can prevent the pathologies lurking and destroying our neighborhoods. If you create a Frankenstein, then it should not be a shock when it seeks to destroy its creator while destroying itself in the process.

We must DEMAND the end of slavery. We must DEMAND for change and take the fearless necessary ACTION to see that change takes place or we all suffer.

Ali Khalid Abdullah is a prisoner and prison activist who founded the Political Prisoners of War Coalition. You can contact him at the following address: Ali Khalid Abdullah- #148130 Thumb Correctional Facility 3225 John Conley Dr. Lapeer, MI 48446 USA

to renounce the PRI. Pablo's principal sin, in the eyes of the President, was to defend...the text of the San Andres Accords and to demand their full implementation."⁴ As a senator in 1998, Salazar formed part of the COCOPA, the Congressional Committee for Peace in Chiapas, which allowed him to take part in the formulation of the San Andres Accords and to educate himself on the many problems plaguing Chiapanecos, particularly the indigenous population. What Salazar will do with that information is yet to be seen, but even he acknowledges that the conditions for a "dialogue" between the EZLN and the Mexican government are not in place, and that it is the government which must take steps to put them there. Of course, politicians' promises and rhetoric are something all too familiar to the Zapatistas; what matters is the reality of what gets done. And with Salazar making comments like "All of the Southeastern states of Mexico are excited to work with President-elect Fox, who has made a commitment to close the [economic gap] between Mexico's North and South with projects of economic and social development,"⁵ it is plain that no revolutionary plans are on Salazar's horizon.

Revolutionary work, however, has never been the forte of political leaders; that which is truly revolutionary never could. It comes from the grass roots, from the people like the indigenous of Chiapas who rebelled against Mexico's "bad government," from those who cannot live comfortably inside a system that exploits, destroys and dehumanizes every second of every day. Some of those revolutionaries have arms, some don't — but all participate in the great task of destroying power and authority as we know it, and doing their best to bring about not a "new world order," but rather a new world which defies orders, celebrating life like never before.

To get involved with any of the groups doing such work in Chiapas, consult these web pages: www.ezln.org, www.globalexchange.org, www.enlacecivil.org.mx, www.mexicosolidarity.org, www.mexicopeace.org, and many more accessible via links from those pages.

¹ The text of the accords is available from www.EZLN.org; this translation by Rosalva Bermudez-Ballin.

² from www.jornada.unam.mx/2000/sep00/000905/016n1gen.html.

³ from www.jornada.unam.mx/2000/ago00/000831/009a1gen.html.

⁴ from www.jornada.unam.mx/2000/ago00/000822/004a1gen.html.

⁵ From www.excelsior.com.mx/nac16.html; Sept. 15th, 2000

The Trial That Wasn't

An Update on the Chattanooga 3

JoNina M. Abron,
Founder and Chair, International Committee to Defend the Chattanooga 3

There has been another delay in the Chattanooga 3 case of three Black activists arrested in 1998 at the Chattanooga (Tennessee) City Hall to protest the deaths of two Black men in late April and May of that year by city police officers. After 150 people went to protest the murders, the politicians had the cops arrest Damon McGee, Mikail Musa Muhammad, and Lorenzo Komboa Ervin. They were arrested for violating Tennessee's "disruption" law, a misdemeanor offense that makes it illegal for a person to use "physical action" or "verbal utterance" to prevent or disrupt a lawful meeting. A few hours before their arrests, Lorenzo, Damon and Mikail helped to organize a protest at Chattanooga City Hall by over 150 people angry over the police killings of two Black men, Montrail Collins and Kevin McCullough, in a two-week period between April 28 and May 7, 1998. Collins and McCullough were two of the over 40 predominantly Black people who have been killed by Chattanooga police since the early 1980s. No police have ever been prosecuted for these killings, but the Chattanooga 3 faced 6 months in prison for this "crime" of daring to speak out against the cops, and after numerous delays, the case was to have finally proceeded to trial on September 12, 2000. But like the seven other delays over the last 2 1/2 years, the delay this time was because the cops and DA were still not ready to go to trial. So they have put the case off until January 11, 2001. But because the State has

had its way with this railroading, the attorneys for the Defense are filing a series of motions to dismiss the case for failure to prosecute, and also alleging that the speech at City Hall was protected by the First Amendment. The accusations are that this entire legal matter is a malicious prosecution, designed to keep Black Autonomy-COPWATCH from doing street organizing and to tie the activists up in court.

But in addition the motion filed by legal counsel in criminal court on the day that the trial should have taken place, there were various legal petitions filed by Lorenzo himself with the federal courts to block a criminal prosecution. One petition, filed in Chattanooga federal court, seeks the removal of the case to federal court because the case cannot possibly be fairly heard

in the state system and that the prosecution is racially motivated and politically tainted.

Another case, filed in federal court in Nashville, is a Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus demanding a hearing to review the statute and hold the case there in federal court. Accompanying that Petition is an application for a stay of

the state prosecution because of bias in the local state judiciary. All of these legal papers allege that the speech in City Hall was protected speech at a public forum, and that the prosecutions are designed to punish all the defendants for the contents of their speeches.

Although the trial court made no reference to this, clearly this colored their decision. Those legal motions, and the numerous letters, e-mails and faxes they have received from all over the world have frozen their zeal of railroading us to jail. Certainly the tourist boycott, which has been

going on for over a year now has hit them in their pocketbooks. The Convention and Visitors Bureau now admit losing 10% of their normal tourist business this season. That equals millions of dollars, and over 100,000 tourists. Boycott Chattanooga, the coalition of groups and individuals, has been putting out thousands of brochures listing the persons killed in

the city by police agencies, and placing them at rest stops throughout the Southeast. In addition, an internet campaign has recently started, with a website at: maxinej.tripod.com/policemurder.html. All of this has managed to give pause to the Chattanooga-Hamilton County officials, who in turn, have halted the trial. Make

no mistake: the City of Chattanooga and State of Tennessee want to see the Chattanooga 3 in jail, and more importantly, wants to preserve the state criminal statute on disruptions. They want it for the day there will be a mass upsurge by a Black and their anti-racist allies. They understand that their days are numbered. But we must continue to fight.

Write, fax or email a letter of protest to the district attorney demanding that charges against the Chattanooga 3 be dismissed. Send letters to: Bill Cox, District Attorney: Bill Cox, Hamilton County District YM_M4I5S3S_24 Attorney General, City-County Courts Bldg., 3rd floor, 601 Market St. Chattanooga, TN. 37402 or email him at: Bill_Cox@hcda.cps.k12.tn.us, or fax him at: (423) 209-7401.

Also, it is very important to contribute to the Chattanooga 3 Legal Defense Fund. If necessary, Lorenzo, Damon and Mikail will take their case to the U.S. Supreme Court, and it will cost anywhere between \$5,000 and \$10,000 to hire private attorneys. (Lorenzo now has a public defender, and Damon and Mikail have court-appointed attorneys.) In the likely event that the Chattanooga 3 are convicted, \$2,000 to \$3,000 will also be needed for their bond.

Please make your check or money order payable to BANCO (Black Autonomy Network of Community Organizers, which was founded by Lorenzo and Damon in 1999), with a note that you are donating to the legal defense fund. Mail your contribution to P.O. Box 19962, Kalamazoo, MI 49019. Lorenzo Komboa Ervin, Damon McGee and Mikail Musa Muhammad are courageously standing up for the right of Black and justice-minded people in America to engage in political dissent, specifically the right to protest against police brutality. Now more than ever, we must stand up for them.



Hate School?

Do Something About It!

By the Radical Student Union

WHAT IS THE R.S.U.?

Radical, adj., n. - Going to/striking at the root; fundamental; basic. Often used as a derogatory term by those who feel threatened by, or afraid of, a person or a group of people with ideals. Student, n. - 1. A person enrolled in an institution of education. 2. A person who studies or is generally interested in learning. Union, n. - A group of people joined together to protect and promote their interests.

HISTORY

Although the practice of free and natural learning environments predates written history and resistance to compulsory schooling started on day one of its creation, the idea of a Radical Student Union, as it is today here in Florida, grew out of a student/youth workgroup happening as part of the Teach-in On Globalization in St. Petersburg, FL on April 8th, 2000.

BELIEFS/PRINCIPLES

The RSU is a non-political, action based organization founded on principles of voluntary effort and cooperation. In the long term it seeks to challenge and dismantle all forms of authority, hierarchy, compulsion, coercion, and oppression, creating free learning environments based on autonomy and equality in their place. We believe all things deserve respect and the ability to live free and wild, but struggling for such an ideal requires concrete work in all aspects of society, right here and now. And that's what we're doing by establishing a support network of students working towards more justice, freedom and equality in the current institutions of education. We believe learning is natural, it happens with or without Schools or Teachers. While there are some positive aspects in providing resources and a structure for learning, that is not what schools main purpose is in this society. Schools function is to institutionalize education so it can be used as a tool to socialize kids, and that's not a conspiracy theory, that's their stated mission. Grades and rewards are used to establish divisions between different types of students and also to create motivation and excitement for work most people have little-to-no interest in. A subtle form of slavery, but slavery none the less. We call it Grade-Slavery (similar to Wage-Slavery in the workplace...where there's a boss of any kind, there is not freedom.) We feel this in itself is manipulative and negative, but the fact that kids are being socialized into a world of industrial capitalism, where profit is placed before human need and ecological integrity is completely CRAZY! We believe that classism, sexism, racism, homophobia, species-ism, size-ism... all these things are just a few examples of the domination and discrimination that are encountered on a daily basis in many different ways in schools, some subtle, some not so subtle... but never acceptable. We need to constantly challenge ourselves and others. If things are gonna change, we need respect and diversity. We think youth is beautiful and powerful thing. And in our culture adult/child relationships are far too often based on a dominant/submissive power dynamic, creating a systematic oppression instead of a safe environment for kids. This is played out in school BIG TIME. Fortunately, we also believe youth is an attitude not an

age. And that being old doesn't make you an adult, usually boredom, greed and excessive responsibility make you an adult. This is avoidable. "An injury to one is an injury to all!" if you're familiar with the IWW (and you would be, if your history teacher wasn't a complete jackass) you'll notice this isn't the only thought we have in common with the One Big Union. We believe in solidarity and mutual aid. In other words, supporting and helping each other. Not only does the movement depend on it, so do our lives... we believe reform is not enough. For example, winning a free speech battle may really just be exercising (and hopefully flexing) our legal rights to expression. But this in itself is not the desired end, if our goal really is social transformation, we must not be content playing by their rules. Sometimes breaking laws and social taboos is an essential part of breaking the spell that keeps us under the control of someone other than ourselves. (These are some of the ideas that the RSU was established by and promotes. There are tons of books on radical education, youth liberation and Anarchism that further expound on this stuff, check 'em out!)

STRUCTURE(?)

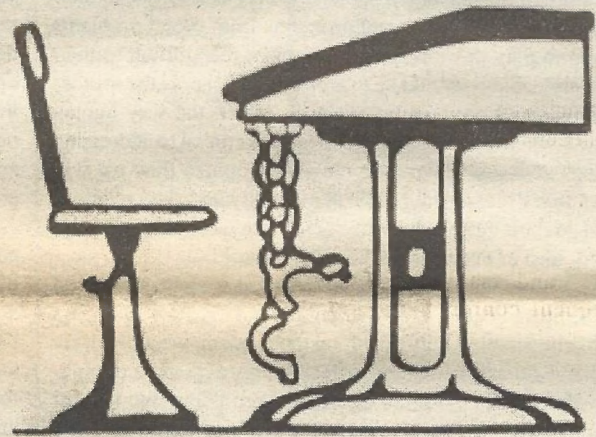
How it has, is and can be organized: the tactics and styles that a group of people organizing under the banner of the R.S.U. uses will vary, do to group autonomy. Membership, as of now, is simply defined by activity. The structure is very loose. There are no leaders, only activists/organizers, which is a role everyone who wants to be involved is expected to assume. The newsletter can act as a public mouthpiece as well as an organizing tool, as it grows. The publishing staff can rotate as desired by the network. It makes sense for groups to modify it by adding pages, or producing separate publications for local outreach. If there needs to be decisions made we will hold annual or bi-annual state/regional meetings. There are two broad components of the organizing that we work on: education & resistance.

EDUCATION

This involves any activities related to creating alternatives to the options that are made available to students, such as: organizing study groups on topics of interest; drop out support groups; hosting workshops or presentations on practical skills, ideas poorly represented in the mainstream, arts & crafts, etc.; hosting public events, like video showings, potlucks, and benefit concerts to raise awareness of the groups existence, collect funds and inspire people to get active. There could also be the option of finding cool home-schooling groups or families and finding out if they need support or volunteers. Finally, you can put together a "free school" calendar that lists all the rad., free (or cheap) educational events in the area. Some of the effort could be organized in schools as well as out. For example, giving presentations or inviting good speakers into school on topics that are useful and relevant to kids, organizing in-school groups designed to make info. On educational alternatives available to all, etc...

RESISTANCE

This involves the more reactionary side of things. Again, it can (and should) take place in and out of school. It could mean starting a campaign around a single messed up rule at your school, fighting military recruitment on campus, exposing schools in general as a social crime, attacking the boredom and monotony of school life,



or bringing up other social issues that are being ignored in your school, such as globalized economic domination by the WTO and IMF, the omission of important history, the dissection of killed, sentient animals, or the benefits of a vegetarian diet. Campaigns and actions may consist of overt organizational effort or covert propaganda and revenge. Just be careful what actions are claimed under the title of the RSU and how it could effect overt organizing. RSU could act as a mouthpiece and support group for any illegal action, although we don't encourage that kind of naughty behavior. Speaking of support, it seems that may be one of the most important role this network can play. Rebellions happen all the time in schools, they're just silenced, isolated, and dealt with quietly, in secrecy. We can give a voice to these actions, organize support rallies, flood school phone lines with opposition and outrage, let kids know that they aren't alone in their dissent. And when situations escalate we have a whole mess of tactics: walk-outs, sit-ins, office occupations, sabotage, fighting court battles, public smear campaigns...all these are tools in our tool box. Remember that it's much easier for officials to target lone rebellious suspects. It's also important to note that the recent frenzies over school violence could backlash on us. Don't let 'em get away with scape-goating us. The future may also bring the need for legal defense, so let's be prepared. But the reality of the current situation is that up until the printing of this newsletter, overt organizing has been limited to mass flyer distribution and a communication forum through email (to the knowledge of the editors). Largely what we've done is build castles in the sky, now it's time to put some foundations under them. There are tons of ideas in the above section. So let's get out there, get stuff moving and let others know what you've been up to, so they can spread the word in their areas. But how much happens really depends on how much effort local groups put in. Whether a group holds public weekly meetings or sticks to covert action, anonymously communicating through a xerocracy (aka communication through photocopied flyers) is up to members. This is a critical point in finding out where this effort will bring us. It's super important that we continue to grow; as individuals- reading, gaining experience and confidence; as a network- getting to know other organizers, increasing awareness of our existence, and gaining new activist/members; and as a movement, continuing to push harder for free learning environments against an establishment infested with domination and authority. To get involved contact: RSUflorida@hotmail.com P.O. Box 8566 Tampa, FL 33674 if you're not in (or near) start your own damn union... and tell us all about it!

Revolutionary

What is Social Ecology?

By Murray Bookchin

(This essay is an excerpt from a larger article that was originally published in M. Zimmerman, ed., *Environmental Philosophy* (Prentice Hall, 1993).)

What defines social ecology as social is its recognition of the often-overlooked fact that nearly all our present ecological problems arise from deep-seated social problems. Conversely, our present ecological problems cannot be clearly understood, much less resolved, without resolutely dealing with problems within society. To make this point more concrete; economic, ethnic, cultural, and gender conflicts, among many others, lie at the core of the most serious ecological dislocations we face today — apart, to be sure, from those that are produced by natural catastrophes.

If this approach seems a bit too sociological for those environmentalists who identify the primary ecological problem as being the preservation of wildlife or wilderness, or more broadly as attending to "Gaia" to achieve planetary "oneness," they might wish to consider certain recent developments. The massive oil spill by an Exxon tanker at Prince William Sound, the extensive deforestation of redwood trees by the Maxxam Corporation, and the proposed James Bay hydroelectric project that would flood vast forested areas of northern Quebec, to cite only a few, are sobering reminders that the real battleground on which the ecological future of the planet will be decided is clearly a social one.

Indeed, to separate ecological problems from social problems — or even to play down or give only token recognition to their crucial relationship — would be to grossly misconstrue the sources of the growing environmental crisis. In effect, the way human beings deal with each other as social beings is crucial to addressing the ecological crisis. Unless we clearly recognize this, we will surely fail to see that the hierarchical mentality and class relationships that so thoroughly permeate society are what has given rise to the very idea of dominating the natural world.

Unless we realize that the present market society, structured around the brutally competitive imperative of "grow or die," is a thoroughly impersonal, self-operating mechanism, we will falsely tend to blame other phenomena — technology as such or population growth as such — for environmental problems. We will ignore their root causes, such as trade for profit, industrial expansion, and the identification of progress with corporate self-interest.

In short, we will tend to focus on the symptoms of a grim social pathology rather than on the pathology itself, and our efforts will be directed toward limited goals whose attainment is more cosmetic than curative.

Some critics have recently questioned whether social ecology has treated the issue of spirituality in ecological politics adequately, but social ecology was in fact among the earliest of contemporary ecologies to call for a sweeping change in existing spiritual values.

"The real battleground on which the ecological future of the planet will be decided is clearly a social one."

Such a change would be a far-reaching transformation of our prevailing mentality of domination into one of complementarity, one that sees our role in the natural world as creative, supportive, and deeply appreciative of the needs of nonhuman life. In social ecology a truly natural spirituality would center on the ability of an awakened humanity to function as moral agents for diminishing needless suffering, engaging in ecological restoration, and fostering an aesthetic appreciation of natural evolution in all its fecundity and diversity.

Thus, in its call for a collective effort to change society, social ecology has never eschewed the need for a radically new spirituality or mentality. As early as 1965, the first public statement to advance the ideas of social ecology concluded with the injunction: "The cast of mind that today organizes differences among human and other life-forms along hierarchical lines of 'supremacy' or 'inferiority' will give way to an outlook that deals with diversity in an ecological manner — that is, according to an ethics of

complementarity." In such an ethics, human beings would complement nonhuman beings with their own capacities to produce a richer, creative, and developmental whole — not as a "dominant" species but as supportive one. Although this ethics, expressed at times as an appeal for the "respiritization of the natural world," recurs throughout the literature of social ecology, it should not be mistaken for a theology that raises a deity above the natural world or even that seeks to discover one within it. The spirituality advanced by social ecology is definitively naturalist (as one would expect, given its relation to ecology itself, which stems from the biological sciences) rather than supernaturalistic or pantheistic.

The effort in some quarters of the ecology movement to prioritize the need to develop a pantheistic "eco-spirituality" over the need to address social factors (which actually erode all forms of spirituality) raises serious questions about their ability to come to grips with reality. At a time when a blind social mechanism, the market, is turning soil into sand, covering fertile land with concrete, poisoning air and water, and producing sweeping climatic and atmospheric changes, we cannot ignore the impact that a hierarchical and class society has on the natural world. We must face the fact that economic growth, gender oppressions, and ethnic domination — not to speak of corporate, state, and bureaucratic interests — are much more capable of shaping the future of the natural world than are privatistic forms of spiritual self-regeneration. These forms of domination must be confronted by collective action and by major social movements that challenge the social sources of the ecological crisis, not simply by personalistic forms of consumption and investment that often go under the rubric of "green capitalism." The present highly co-optative society is only too eager to find new means of commercial aggrandizement and to add ecological verbiage to its advertising and customer relations efforts.

Murray Bookchin, a libertarian communist, has been involved in social movements since the 1930s and has written numerous books and articles on political theory (including Marxism and Anarchism), social ecology, philosophy, cities, libertarian municipalism, culture, and more. His most recent work is a three-volume history of popular movements within revolutions, *The Third Revolution* (published by Continuum). He can be reached at jbiehl@together.net

Civil Disobedience to Oppose Cement Plant

By Ryan Brouillard

Tallahassee, FL—Five activists with Ichetucknee Earth First! locked down for five hours in the entrance to Gov. Jeb Bush's office on August 29 at 8:45 a.m. to demand that he revoke the permits that the state granted to a subsidiary of Anderson Columbia Co. to build a cement kiln 3.5 miles from the pristine Ichetucknee River.

The group gave a list of demands to Bush's staff:

— To meet with Gov. Bush and DEP Secretary Struhs with the media present

— To revoke Anderson Columbia permits until:

1) An Environmental Impact Statement has been done

2) A statewide referendum is held to let the people decide

3) A complete cleanup of all polluted Anderson Columbia sites

For the next five hours, connected by bicycle locks around their necks, the group sat in the doorway to the press room and answered questions from the media that had shown up for a press conference on Bush's One Florida plan to eliminate affirmative action. After the media interviewed those locked down, they went in and asked Bush about rumors of scandal, complaints and environmental concerns involved in the cement plant and land use deal. Around 10:30, Struhs came to talk to the group. After being bombarded by questions about scandal and lack of protection by the state in front of about 25 media outlets, he asked them for a private interview away from the Earth First! lockdown.

Outside the capitol building, members of Sierra Club, Florida Green Party, Ichetucknee Mobilization, University of Florida groups Environmental Action Group and Student Peace Action and many Tallahassee high school students protested on the streets with huge puppets and signs. One protester scaled a telephone pole and

dropped a banner reading "No Permits to Polluters!"

Anderson Columbia Co. and its subsidiaries are notorious for noncompliance with environmental laws and have racked up 17 violations for dumping in waterways, soil contamination, air pollution, operating without permits etc.

The Ichetucknee River is a spring-fed, crystal clear waterway situated between wetlands of old and secondary growths of cypress. The river is a refreshing 72 degrees year round and is one of Florida's cleanest rivers and listed as an outstanding river system. There are three endangered species — the rare silt snail, the red-eye blind crayfish and the Florida manatee — which live within a few miles of the kiln site, which was designated in original county land use plans for agriculture, not industry. Suwannee American Co. was granted a special permit by the Suwannee County Commission earlier this summer.

As clean as this river is, there are already alarming amounts of mercury present. Also, there are currently warnings on fish caught in the two rivers which the Ichetucknee flows into — the Santa Fe and Suwannee — because of methyl mercury poisoning due to consumption.

The cement kiln, which had its groundbreaking

ceremony on August 28, will emit dangerous levels of mercury, phosphates, particulates and dioxins after burning tires to make portland cement.

Ichetucknee Earth First! wanted to make people aware of several facts about this issue:

- An environmental impact statement that was never done to determine whether this kiln would

affect the air, water and human/animal health.

- That modeling research was paid for by Suwannee American and not done by the DEP.

- An estimated \$27 million from state Preservation 2000 funds that were used to buy another quarry from Anderson

Columbia to compensate for lost revenue.

- The fact that Anderson Columbia never ceased construction after the Suwannee County clerk of court would not allow the building permits granted by the county and state, since the proper public meetings were never held.

- Rumored back-room deals made by the state and Suwannee American for the permits.

- That Anderson Columbia has been linked to



Earth First! locked down in Gov. Bush's office

paying bribes to former state officials Bo Johnson and Randy Mackey, who were both on the highway planning board.

People who oppose the cement kiln hold Gov. Bush responsible, because after he canoed down the river with DEP Secretary Struhs last year, he vowed to save the river and not grant permits, due to Anderson Columbia's history of environmental carelessness. A few months later, after the company sued the state and doanted \$1 million of road paving services to the county and \$175,000 to the Republican Party, Bush reversed his decision and allowed the Suwannee County and DEP to grant permits.

Another point of concern is another cement kiln approved two years ago by the Alachua County Commission for Florida Rock Inc., which has been operating now for about 7 months. This was the first cement kiln to be approved in the United States in 15 years due to environmental concerns. Florida Rock has since violated testing regulations for water quality after failing to do or allow a base line water sample when the site began operation. Recently Florida Rock Inc. blocked access to the Florida DEP and other state and county officials to do the mandatory, on-site testing.

Environmentalists opposed to the Suwannee American cement kiln question how the state's ability to ensure the safety of the Ichetucknee and life-forms.

After five hours of being locked together, it was apparent that Bush was not going to appear to talk to the group. They agreed to unlock and attend an open meeting with the EP to discuss a possible court action or statewide referendum to block the construction. Police made no arrests.

For further information on this issue, see: www.metanet.org/im and www.ichetucknee.org or email ichmobile@hotmail.com

No Compromise in Defense of the Ichetucknee River. Earth First!

Ecology...

On Green Consumerism and the Ecological Crisis

From www.anarchistfaq.org

CAN GREEN CONSUMERISM STOP THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS?

No. In fact, it could hurt by creating new markets and increasing growth. However, so there is no misunderstanding: we fully recognise that using recycled or renewable raw materials, reducing consumption and buying "ecologically friendly" products and technologies are very important, and we would be the last to denounce such things. But such measures are not solutions to the ecological problems we face. At best, they only delay, not prevent, capitalism's ultimate destruction of the planet's ecological base.

Green consumerism is all the establishment has to offer in the face of mounting ecological destruction. Usually, it boils down to nothing more than slick advertising campaigns by big corporate polluters to hype band-aid measures such as using a few recycled materials or contributing money to a wildlife fund, which are showcased as "concern for the environment" while off camera the pollution and devouring of non-renewable resources goes on. They also engage in "greenwashing," in which companies lavishly fund PR campaigns to paint themselves "green" without altering their current polluting practices!

This means "green" companies and products actually are not. Many firms hire expensive Public Relations firms and produce ads to paint a false image of themselves as ecologically friendly (i.e. "greenwashing"). This is a weakness of market economies: they hinder (even distort) the flow of information required for consumers to make informed decisions. The market does not provide enough information for consumers to determine whether a product is actually green or not — it just gives them a price and advertising. Consumers have to rely on other sources, many of which are minority journals and organisations and so difficult to find, to provide them with the accurate information required to counter the power and persuasion of advertising and the work of PR experts (see "Silencing Spring" chapter in John Stauber and Sheldon Rampton's *Toxic Sludge is Good for You!* for a good summary of the use of PR firms and greenwashing).

Even "ecologically friendly" firms like The Body Shop present a false image of what they do. Journalist Jon Entine investigated them in 1994 and discovered that only a minuscule fraction of its ingredients came from *Trade Not Aid* (a program claimed to aid developing countries).

Entine also discovered that the company also used many outdated, off-the-shelf product formulas filled with non-renewable petrochemicals as well as animal tested ingredients. When he contacted the company, he received libel threats and it hired a PR company to combat Entine's story. [*Toxic Sludge is Good for You!*, pp. 74-5] This highlights the dangers of looking to consumerism to solve ecological problems. As Entine argues: "The Body Shop is a corporation with the privileges and power in society as all others. Like other corporations it makes products that are unsustainable, encourages consumerism, uses non-renewable materials, hires giant PR and law firms, and exaggerates its environment policies. If we are to become a sustainable society, it is crucial that we have institutions... that are truly sustainable. The Body Shop has deceived the public by trying to make us think that they are a lot further down the road to sustainability than they really are. We should... no longer... lionise the Body Shop and others who claim to be something they are not." [*Toxic Sludge is Good for You!*, p. 76]

Thus green consumerism is hindered by the nature of the market — how the market reduces everything to price, hiding information needed to make truly informed decisions on what to consume. Moreover, it is capable of being used to further ecological damage by using PR to paint a false picture of the companies and their environmental activities.

Andrew Watson sums up green consumerism very eloquently as follows: "green consumerism, which is largely a cynical attempt to maintain profit margins, does not challenge capital's eco-cidal accumulation, but actually facilitates it by opening a new market. All products, no matter how 'green,' cause some pollution, use some resources and energy, and cause some ecological disturbance. This would not matter in a society in which production was rationally planned, but in an exponentially expanding economy, production, however 'green', would eventually destroy the Earth's environment. Ozone-friendly aerosols, for example, still use other harmful chemicals; create pollution in

their manufacture, use and disposal; and use large amounts of resources and energy. Of course, up to now, the green pretensions of most companies have been exposed largely as presenting an acceptably green image, with little or no substance. The market is presented as the saviour of the environment. Environmental concern is commodified and transformed into ideological support for capitalism. Instead of raising awareness of the causes of the ecological crisis, green consumerism mystifies them. The solution is presented as an individual act rather than as the collective action of individuals struggling for social change. The corporations laugh all the way to the bank" [From *Red to Green*, pp. 9-10]

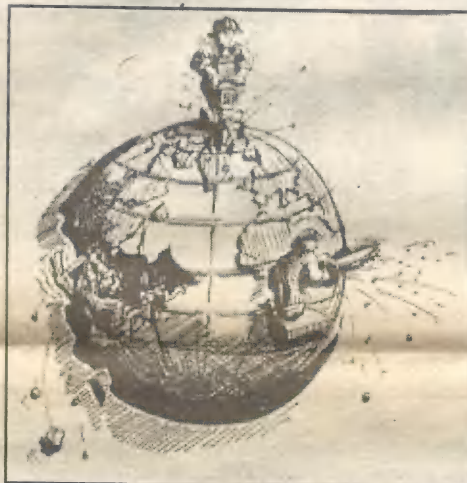
Green consumerism, by its very nature, cannot challenge the "grow-or-die" nature of capitalism. Even "green" companies must make a profit, and hence must expand to survive. "Ethical" consumerism, like "ethical" investment, is still based on profit making, the extraction of surplus value from others. This is hardly "ethical," as it cannot challenge the inequality in exchange that lies at the heart of capitalism nor the authoritarian social relationships it creates.

In addition, since capitalism is a world system, companies can produce and sell their non-green and dangerous goods elsewhere. Many of the products and practices banned or boycotted in developed countries are sold and used in developing ones.

For example, Agent Orange (used by the US to defoliate forests during the Vietnam War) is used as an herbicide in the Third World, as is DDT. Agent Orange contains one of the most toxic compounds known to humanity and was responsible for thousands of deformed children in Vietnam. Ciba-Geigy continued to sell Enterovioform (a drug which caused blindness and paralysis in at least 10,000 Japanese users of it) in those countries that permitted it to do so. Ciba-Geigy also sprayed a pesticide called Galecron on unprotected Egyptian children to test its safety, later claiming it deeply regretted using the children as "volunteers." Many companies have moved to developing countries to escape the stricter pollution and labour laws in the developed countries.

Neither does green consumerism question why it should be the ruling elites within capitalism that decide what and how to produce. Since these elites are driven by profit considerations, if it is profitable to pollute, pollution will occur. Moreover, green consumerism does not challenge the (essential) capitalist principle of consumption for the sake of consumption, nor can it come to terms with the fact that "demand" is created, to a large degree, by "suppliers," specifically by advertising agencies that use a host of techniques to manipulate public tastes, as well as using their financial clout to ensure that "negative" (truthful) stories about companies' environmental records do not surface in the mainstream media.

Because ethical consumerism is based wholly on market solutions to the ecological crisis, it fails to see the root cause of the crisis: the atomising nature of market society and the social relationships it creates. Atomised individuals ("soloists") cannot change the world, and "voting" on the market hardly reduces their atomisation. As Murray Bookchin argues, "[t]ragically, these millions [of 'soloists'] have surrendered their social power, indeed, their very personalities, to politicians and bureaucrats who live in a nexus of obedience and command in which they are normally expected to play subordinate roles. Yet this is precisely the immediate cause of the ecological



Fire set at GOP Headquarters

By Earth

BLOOMINGTON, IN - The Earth Liberation Front (ELF) has officially claimed responsibility for setting a fire at the GOP headquarters in Bloomington, IN on September 9, 2000. This is the fourth major action committed by the ELF in Bloomington this year.

The ELF communique stated, "The fire was set as a reminder to politicians such as John Hostettler that we are watching and that we will not sit idly by as they push for plans like I-69."

The ELF is an international underground organization that uses direct action in the form of economic sabotage to stop the destruction of the natural environment and exploitation of life.

"The construction of I-69 would fill the coffers of Multinational Corporations at the expense of the environment and of working people everywhere. I-69 is just one example of the willingness of the rich to bleed the Earth and the working class to fulfill their money lust," the communique continued.

"We have no faith in the present system of electoral politics where every candidate both Republican and Democrat is funded with corporate blood money," the ELF stated.

The communique finished by stating, "Because there are no viable options on the ballot, we must find another means of voting. Our non-participation in and active resistance against this system, controlled by the rich, is our means of voting. We are everywhere and nowhere."

On January 23, 2000 the ELF claimed responsibility for burning a luxury home in the Sterling Woods development in Bloomington causing over \$200,000 in damages. Then on April 30, 2000 the ELF struck again in Bloomington targeting roadway equipment causing \$500,000 in damages. The third action

this year in Bloomington came on June 30, 2000 when the group claimed credit for spiking trees in the logging areas of Monroe and Brown counties. The ELF in the last three years alone has inflicted well over \$35 million in damages to entities profiting off the destruction of the earth in the United States.

Contact: Craig Rosebraugh, spokesperson, North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office (503)478-0902



Anarchist Jailed for Resisting Grand Jury

Dear Supporters,

As many of you may have heard, I was arrested on a warrant September 27 by agents from the FBI, US Marshalls office, and local police. The warrant stemmed from my refusal to appear before a grand jury convened in Portland investigating the actions of the Animal and Earth Liberation Fronts.

I was taken to a federal detention center and was expecting to be transported to Portland to await trial. Then, last Friday, a small miracle happened. The prosecutor in Portland and the one in Washington both tried to block me from getting bail. Federal agents were flown in to convince the magistrate not to release me, but due to overwhelming support from the animal, environmental, and Anarchist communities I was released on bail! The courtroom was overflowing with supporters, and they managed to raise more than the amount needed for my bail in less than 20 minutes! I am overwhelmed by the generosity of everyone who helped me, and can not begin to express my gratitude.

Now that I am on the outside again I am preparing to fight the charge of criminal contempt. It is not likely that I will win however, and chances are fair that I will be spending at least a year in federal prison, possibly more.

We must first put this in perspective. The crime I am accused of basically amounts to missing a court date. So why such a serious penalty? I say it is because they are afraid. All across the world people are rising up. Small cells of committed activists are fighting for human freedom, ecological sanity, animal liberation, and autonomy. Large protests are finally going past the tired, ineffective marches and sign holdings that kept the government safe from us all these years, and now are actually becoming a threat again! People are ignoring electoral politics and taking action themselves. We are sick of the lie that tells us 4 minutes of action every four years will change the world. We are sick of watching as the last of the wild dies, as the animals nations are massacred, and as our communities become devoid of real life, happiness, freedom and personality. We don't want to live in a world owned by Starbucks, we don't want to work our existence away making profit for the rich bastards we all despise, and we don't want to be beaten down and arrested for finally speaking up! As we rise, they must try to knock us down. The grand jury system is being used all over this country to keep the power in the hands of the elite few.

We can not let this happen without resistance! On Friday the 27th of October I am to appear in Portland at 9am before a judge. Let us show him that I am not alone. Come to the courthouse (1000 SW 3rd Ave, Portland, OR 97204) at 8am to show your support. To make a donation to my defense fund, please send a check to the address below ear marked for Josh Harper.

And of course, the best thing you can do to support me is keep the resistance growing.

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Thank You,
Josh
(for more info, see ONWARD #1)

crisis of our time — a cause that has its historic roots in the market society that engulfs us" [*Toward an Ecological Society*, p. 81].

Until market society is dismantled, solutions like ethical consumerism will be about as effective as fighting a forest fire with a water pistol. Such solutions are doomed to failure because they promote individual responses to social problems, problems that by their very nature require collective action, and deal only with the symptoms, rather than focusing on the cause of the problem in the first place.

Reclaim the Cities: From Protest to Popular Power

By Cindy Milstein

"Direct action gets the goods," proclaimed the Industrial Workers of the World nearly a century ago. And in the short time since Seattle, this has certainly proven to be the case. Indeed, "the goods" reaped by the new direct action movement here in North America have included creating doubt as to the scope and nature of globalization, shedding light on the nearly unknown workings of international trade and finance bodies, and making *Anarchism* and *anticapitalism* almost household words. As if that weren't enough, we find ourselves on the streets of twenty-first-century metropolises demonstrating our power to resist in a way that models the good society we envision: a truly democratic one.

But is this *really* what democracy looks like? The impulse to "reclaim the streets" is an understandable one. When industrial capitalism first started to emerge in the early nineteenth century, its machinations were relatively visible. Take, for instance, the enclosures. Pasture lands used in common for centuries to provide villages with their very sustenance were systematically fenced off—enclosed—in order to graze sheep, whose wool was needed for the burgeoning textile industry. Communal life was briskly thrust aside in favor of privatization, forcing people into harsh factories and crowded cities.

Advanced capitalism, as it pushes past the fetters of even nation-states in its insatiable quest for growth, encloses life in a much more expansive yet generally invisible way: fences are replaced by consumer culture. We are raised in an almost totally commodified world where nothing comes for free, even futile attempts to remove oneself from the market economy. This commodification seeps into not only what we eat, wear, or do for fun but also into our language, relationships, and even our very biology and minds. We have lost not only our communities and public spaces but control over our own lives; we have lost the ability to define ourselves outside capitalism's grip, and thus genuine meaning itself begins to dissolve.

"Whose Streets? Our Streets!" then, is a legitimate emotional response to the feeling that even the most minimal of public, non-commodified spheres has been taken from us. Yet in the end, it is simply a frantic cry from our cage. We have become so confined, so thoroughly damaged, by capitalism as well as state control that crumbs appear to make a nourishing meal.

Temporarily closing off the streets during direct actions does provide momentary spaces in which to practice democratic process, and even offers a sense of empowerment, but such events leave power for power's sake, like the very pavement beneath our feet, unchanged. Only when the serial protest mode is escalated into a struggle for popular or horizontal power can we create cracks in the figurative concrete, thereby opening up ways to challenge capitalism, nation-states, and other systems of domination.

This is not to denigrate the direct action move-

ment in the US and elsewhere; just the opposite. Besides a long overdue and necessary critique of numerous institutions of command and obedience, the movement is quietly yet crucially supplying the outlines of a freer society. This prefigurative politics is the very strength and vision of today's direct action, where the *means* themselves are understood to also be the *ends*. We're not putting off the good society until some distant future but attempting to carve out room for it in the here and now, however tentative and contorted under the given social order. In turn, this consistency of means and ends implies an ethical approach to politics. How we act now is how we want others to act, too. We try to model a notion of goodness even as we fight for it.

This can implicitly be seen in the affinity group a n d spokescouncil structures for decision making at direct actions. Both supply much needed spaces in which to school ourselves in direct democracy. Here, in the best of cases, we can proactively set the agenda, carefully deliberate together over questions, and come to decisions that strive to take everyone's needs and desires into account. Substantive discussion replaces checking boxes on a ballot; face-to-face participation replaces handing over our lives to so-called representatives; nuanced and reasoned solutions replace lesser-of-two-(or-three)-evils' thinking. The democratic process utilized during demonstrations decentralizes power even as it offers tangible solidarity; for example, affinity groups afford greater and more diverse numbers of people a real share in decision making, while spokescouncils allow for intricate coordination—even on a global level. This is, as 1960s' activists put it, the power to create rather than destroy.

The beauty of this new movement, it could be said, is that it strives to take its own ideals to heart. In doing so, it has perhaps unwittingly created the demand for such directly democratic practices on a permanent basis. Yet the haunting question underlying episodic "street democracy"

remains unaddressed: How can *everyone* come together to make decisions that affect *society as a whole* in participatory, mutualistic, and ethical ways? In other words, how can each and every one of us—not just a counterculture or this protest movement—really transform and ultimately control our lives and that of our communities?

This is, in essence, a question of power—who has it, how it is used, and to what ends. To varying degrees, we all know the answer in relation to current institutions and systems. We can generally explain what we are *against*. That is exactly why we are protesting, whether it is against capitalism and/or nation-states, or globalization in whole or part. What we have largely failed to articulate, however, is any sort of response in relation to liberatory institutions and systems.

We often can't express, especially in any coherent and utopian manner, what we are *for*. Even as we prefigure a way of making power horizontal, equitable, and hence, hopefully an essential part of a free society, we ignore the reconstructive vision that a di-

rectly democratic process holds up right in front of our noses. fundamental level of decision making in a society: a neighborhood or town. Now, geography plays a much larger role. Out of historic, economic, cultural, religious, and other reasons, we may find ourselves living side by side with a wide range of individuals and their various identities. Most of these people are not our friends per se. Still, the very diversity we encounter is the life of a vibrant city itself. The accidents and/or numerous personal decisions that have brought us together often create a fair amount of *heterogeneity* precisely because we haven't all chosen to come together for a specific reason. In this context, where we start from a place of difference, decision-making mechanisms need to be much more capable of allowing for dissent; that is, diversity needs to be clearly retained within any notions of unity. As such, majoritarian decision-making processes begin to make more sense.

Then, too, there is the question of scale. It is hard to imagine being friends with hundreds, or even thousands, of people, nor maintaining a single-issue identity with that many individuals; but we can share a feeling of community and a striving toward some common good that allows each of us to flourish. In turn, when greater numbers of people come together on a face-to-face basis to reshape their neighborhoods and towns, the issues as well as the viewpoints will multiply, and alliances will no doubt change depending on the specific topic under discussion. Thus the need for a place where we can meet as human beings at the most face-to-face level—that is, an assembly of active citizens—to share our many identities and interests in hopes of balancing both the individual and community in all we do.

As well, trust and accountability function differently at the affinity group versus civic level. We generally reveal more of ourselves to friends; and such unwritten bonds of love and affection hold us more closely together, or at least give us added impetus to work things out. Underlying this is a higher-than-average degree of trust, which serves to make us accountable to each other.

On a community level, the reverse is more often true: accountability lets us to trust each other. Hopefully, we share bonds of solidarity and respect; yet since we can't know each other well, such bonds only make sense if we determine them together, and then record them, write them down, for all to refer back to in the future, and even revisit if need be. Accountable, democratic structures of our own making provide the foundation for trust since the power to decide is both transparent and ever-amenable to scrutiny.

There are also issues of time and space. Affinity groups, in the scheme of things, are generally temporary configurations—they may last a few months, or a few years, but often not much longer. Once the particular reasons why we've come together have less of an immediate imperative, or as our friendships falter, such groups often fall by the wayside. And even during a group's life span, in the interim between direct actions, there is frequently no fixed place or face to decision making, nor any regularity, nor much of a record of who decided what and how. Moreover, affinity groups are not open to everyone but only those who share a particular identity or attachment. As such, although an affinity group can certainly choose to shut down a street, there is ultimately something slightly authoritarian in small groups taking matters into their own hands, no matter what their political persuasion.

Deciding what to do with streets in general—say, how to organize transportation, encourage street life, provide green space, and so on—should be a matter open to everyone interested if it is to be truly participatory and nonhierarchical. This implies ongoing and open institutions of direct democracy, for everything from decision making to conflict resolution. We need to be able to know when and where citizen assemblies are meeting; we need to meet regularly and make use of nonarbitrary procedures; we need to keep track of what decisions have been made. But more important, if we so choose, we all need to have access to the power to discuss, deliberate, and make decisions about matters that affect our communities and beyond.

Indeed, many decisions have a much wider



rectly democratic process holds up right in front of our noses.

For all intents and purposes, our movement remains trapped. On the one hand, it reveals and confronts domination and exploitation. The political pressure exerted by such widespread agitation may even be able to influence current power structures to amend some of the worst excesses of their ways; the powers that be have to listen, and respond to some extent, when the voices become too numerous and too loud. Nevertheless, most people are still shut out of the decision-making process itself, and consequently, have little tangible power over their lives at all. Without this ability to self-govern, street actions translate into nothing more than a countercultural version of interest group lobbying, albeit far more radical than most and generally unpaid.

What the movement forgets is the promise implicit in its own structure: power not only needs to be contested; it must also be constituted anew in liberatory and egalitarian forms. This entails taking the movement's directly democratic process seriously—not simply as a tactic to organize protests, but as the way we organize society, specifically the political realm. The issue becomes: How do we begin to shift the strategy, structure, and values of our movement to the most grassroots level of public policy making?

The most fundamental level of decision making in a demonstration is the affinity group. Here, we come together as friends or because of a common identity, or a combination of the two. We share something in particular; indeed, this common identity is often reflected in the name we choose for our groups. We may not always agree with each other, but there is a fair amount of *homogeneity* precisely because we've consciously chosen to come together for a specific reason—most often having little to do with mere geography. This sense of a shared identity allows for the smooth functioning of a consensus decision-making process, since we start from a place of commonality. In an affinity group, almost by definition, our unity needs to take precedence over our diversity, or our supposed affinity breaks down altogether.

Compare this to what could be the most fun-

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Popular Education for a Free Society



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The Need for a Revolutionary Anarchist Federation

By Ernesto Aguilar

Since the 1980s, the Anarchist movement has experienced a steady increase in numbers and activism. Much of this growth has been spontaneous and inspiring. With that growth, we have seen strides in virtually all strains of Anarchism, but the one that has perhaps had the greatest impact on modern Anarchism in the last 30 years - the revolutionary Anarchist tendency - has grown stagnant, and it's time to resurrect this vibrant wing of Anarchist organizing.

In truth, revolutionary Anarchism has not entirely disappeared, but its most pronounced manifestations in the last 30 years can be traced to Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin (Black revolutionary and author of *Anarchism and the Black Revolution*), and to the now-defunct Love & Rage federation., while for all its faults, L&R represented a leap for North American Anarchist politics.

Whereas Anarchists had often participated invisibly in the revolutionary movement, L&R was an attempt to present Anarchism as a distinct pole within in the broader revolutionary struggle, with its own vision and politics. Some sectors of the Anarchist movement criticized this tendency, along with various missteps and inability to answer criticism of vanguardism and poor organizational practice, as "authoritarian" and sought another method of organizing. The Network of Anarchist Collectives (NAC), a free association-oriented network, was formed in the mid/late-'90s, in part, as an alternative to L&R. L&R's final undoing, however, was a host of political differences within the organization that prompted its dissolution on May 23, 1998. By most accounts, NAC has vanished as a functioning body as well.

L&R's breakup is said to have followed a two-year-long debate within the organization around key questions - among which was a conflict between members who felt most social questions could be solved within an Anarchist framework and those who felt Anarchism didn't offer all the answers. Inevitably, the latter was accused of attempting to co-opt Anarchism with Marxism, while the former was pegged as moralistic and vague. What factors led not only to L&R's failure, but also to some of its organizers to abandon revolutionary Anarchism and adopt authoritarian ideologies? L&R had been dogged for years by accusations of shady politics, in part fueled by the involvement of ex-members of the Trotsky-leaning Revolutionary Socialist League, and also through the federation's willingness to exert its will even at the risk of alienating potential supporters. At its 1993 conference where L&R emerged as a federation, many accused federation advocates of forcing the move from its then-network-based structure at a moment when opponents of the move hadn't expected it; one article later referred to that event as "conference of the long knives." A failure to decisively put

accusations of vanguardist tendencies to rest reportedly hung over the group until its final days and are arguably at the core of its demise.

A united Anarchist group is needed, and we need to move beyond abstractions about organization and start dealing with the realities we profess to understand. It's as if we speak out of ignorance. We don't want structure, stated goals, or to explain our ideals, yet wonder why people think Anarchists are incoherent or why we're isolated and with few allies. When people talk about organizing, we conjure imagery of constitutions, regulations and authority to criticize those propositions, yet we're at a loss when movements in which we stand on the margins develop out of organizing and see victories. We talk of the irrelevance of 'theory' and how we're all about 'direct action,' but do lots of talking while others do the acting, often after reaching unity with others through 'theory.' We say we don't need a 'program' to develop trust with comrades, but are confused when we don't find agreement with those same comrades because we arrogantly assume they think like us. We talk about revolution, but try to turn the fight against white supremacy into a piece of a laundry list for 'the revolution' to deal with. We talk about freedom, when our presumptuous ideas about freedom condemn us to intellectual chains.

Some are opposed to the idea of a federation, arguing it is authoritarian. Often, such activists end up creating 'alternatives' to the 'authoritarians' and end up doing nothing or simply perpetuate the frustrations and isolation Anarchists end up caught in. Is organization anti-Anarchist? In 1912 in Lawrence, Massachusetts, the anarcho-syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World was at the center of organizing when weavers, angered over reduction of their \$8.76/week wages, stopped their looms and walked out of the mill. As mill after mill went on strike, a committee of fifty was set up, representing every nationality among the workers, to make decisions. The IWW organized mass meetings, parades and soup kitchens. They accomplished this by organizing themselves. During the Spanish Revolution, workers and peasants seized and collectivized factories and land, instituting their own workers' committees and peasant assemblies. Spanish revolutionaries created their own institutions, formed armed workers' squads to

patrol the streets, and established a revolutionary force, which went on to battle the fascist Franco's squads. Men and women of these forces elected military commanders, yet rank conferred no real distinction. They historically put the idea of organization to good practice. Why can't Anarchists grasp the need for organization today?

Some segments of the Anarchist community advocate reliance on a network structure that looks to autonomous collectives for all direction. One of the network-collective model's failures is its dependence on regional collectives to reinvent the wheel, so to speak, in terms of creating principles for democratic organizing and structure, when some new organizers (with no disrespect intended) have no clear concept or assistance in this area. Furthermore, networks often operate at a disadvantage by having no means by which to carry out the decisions they make, because they lack internal structure and accountability to see the ideas carried out.

More troubling is the widespread belief in a separatist organizing model dictating that collectives should have no contact, work in relative isolation and only be in touch when necessary. This is better known as a strategy of "leaderless resistance," popularized by former Klansman Louis Beam, and is aimed at keeping supporters autonomous to engage in their own "lone wolf" actions that ideally protect them from arrest, repression and litigation. Obviously, this model has proven a failure in all three respects. Whether we like it or not, repression, jail and death are realities any revolutionary must consider. This isn't a cry for martyrs, but a wake-up call to those who pretend isolation is a defense and small-group action is a substitute for organization.

Clearly, a formal organization isn't the only way for ideas to come to fruition, but developing our own internal structure is probably much more positive and successful than the "on-paper-only" unity some network formations represent. Federations set clear expectations of its members and establish bodies (committees, working groups) to get work done, and develop democratic structures to actually carry out our decisions. Should this entail a massive bureaucracy? Not at all, and the notion that being organized requires an immense bureaucracy is a misconception that needs to be confronted immediately. Love & Rage, for example, developed Working Groups to focus on various issues and struggles. All "organization" means is that we need to agree together to some issues, be willing to share these

goals and the labor involved, and decide our unity is important to our collective empowerment.

For years, achieving unity has been difficult. One method some organizations have utilized is development of a basic 5-12 Point Principles of Unity, framing core beliefs, goals and/or strategies but not committing every cell to a given "platform." Setting out clear Principles of Unity gives local groups a basis for our collective work, but doesn't tie every cadre down to politics that don't apply to its local character, culture or experiences. A new continental federation could bring together groups to build an organization around this basic political/strategic unity.

What voids can a federation fill? The possibilities are too numerous to list! A national campaign against Kom'boa's frame-up by the racist "justice" system in Chattanooga, Tennessee needs to happen now. A *Love & Rage*-style newspaper or mass publication presenting Anarchist news and theory is a great idea. Other priorities include building principled unity with communities of color, revolutionary prisoners and labor; developing Anarchist organizing and networking with existing groups to be a strong voice in struggles; helping new collectives grow and helping them flourish and support regional groups; cultivating independent media, from supporting existing outlets to creating our own - from the aforementioned paper to putting Anarchist readings and ideas to cassette, CD and MP3; serving as a forum for sharing street action experiences in an age when repression is getting fiercer, and tactics for dealing with it; and the list goes on.

Our movement is at a critical time in history, a time when we're seeing strides and losses, but which presents the kinds of opportunities to take Anarchism to a level it needs to go. What are you doing to see that it happens? And can afford NOT to make those strides? It's time to build.

(The author welcomes comments, criticisms, and feedback to this article. Please feel free to contact him at P.O. Box 667233, Houston TX 77266-7233, or e-mail him at may19@pdq.net.)

Reclaim the Cities...

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impact than on just one city; transforming streets, for example, would probably entail coordination on a regional, continental, or even global level. Radicals have long understood such mutualistic self-reliance as a "commune of communes," or confederation. The spokescouncil model used during direct actions hints at an alternative view of globalization. During a spokescouncil meeting, mandated delegates from our affinity groups gather for the purpose of coordination, sharing resources/skills, building solidarity, and so forth, always returning to the grassroots level as the ultimate arbiter. If popular assemblies were our basic unit of decision making, confederations of communities could serve as a way to both transcend parochialism and create interdependence where desirable. For instance, rather than global capitalism and international regulatory bodies, where trade is top-down and profit-oriented, confederations could coordinate distribution between regions in ecological and humane ways, while allowing policy in regard to production, say, to remain at the grassroots.

This more expansive understanding of a prefigurative politics would involve creating institutions that could potentially replace capitalism and nation-states. Such directly democratic in-

stitutions are compatible with, and could grow out of, the ones we use during demonstrations, but they very likely won't be mirror images once we reach the level of society. This does not mean abandoning the principles and ideals undergirding the movement (such as freedom, cooperation, decentralism, solidarity, diversity, face-to-face participation, and the like); it merely means recognizing the limits of direct democracy as it is practiced in the context of a demonstration.

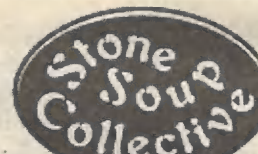
Any vision of a free society, if it is to be truly democratic, must of course be worked out by all of us—first in this movement, and later, in our communities and confederations. Even so, we will probably discover that newly defined understandings of citizenship are needed in place of affinity groups; majoritarian methods of decision making that strive to retain diversity are preferable to simple consensus-seeking models; written compacts articulating rights and duties are crucial to fill out the unspoken culture of protests; and institutionalized spaces for policy making are key to guaranteeing that our freedom to make decisions doesn't disappear with a line of riot police.

It is time to push beyond the oppositional character of our movement by infusing it with a reconstructive vision. That means beginning, right

now, to translate our movement structure into institutions that embody the good society; in short, cultivating direct democracy in the places we call home. This will involve the harder work of reinvigorating or initiating civic gatherings, town meetings, neighborhood assemblies, citizen mediation boards, any and all forums where we can come together to decide our lives, even if only in extralegal institutions at first. Then, too, it will mean reclaiming globalization, not as a new phase of capitalism but as its replacement by confederated, directly democratic communities coordinated for mutual benefit.

It is time to move from protest to politics, from shutting down streets to opening up public space, from demanding scraps from those few in power to holding power firmly in all our hands. Ultimately, this means moving beyond the question of "Whose Streets?" We should ask instead "Whose Cities?" Then and only then will we be able to remake them as our own.

Cindy Milstein is a faculty member at the Institute for Social Ecology (see <http://www.tao.ca/~ise/> for more on the ISE as well as a companion essay to this one by Cindy, "Democracy is Direct") and a board member for the Institute for Anarchist Studies (<http://home.newyorknet.net/ias/intro.htm>). Cindy can be reached at cbmilstein@aol.com



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★ Reclaiming Our History ★

THE Black Liberation Army part 2

By Jalil Muntaqim

The defensive-offensive launched in 1970-71 politico-military initiatives was based upon the degree of repression suffered in the Black community due to COINTELPRO police attacks. The politico-military policy at that time was to establish a defensive (self-defense) front that would offensively protect the interest of the above ground political apparatus aspiration to develop a mass movement towards national liberation. Again, it must be stated that in the early 1970s, the Black underground was the armed wing of the above ground BPP, which, because of the split and factionalism, prevented adequate logistics, and communications between cadre(s) and focus in the Black underground in various parts of the country. It was this situation which caused the greatest problem to the advent of the Black Liberation Army, upon which the commencement of armed struggle could be said to have been premature in the sense that our capacity to wage a sustained protracted national liberation war was not possible. This was due to the split in the above ground political apparatus: the Black underground still depending on the above ground for logistics and communications; the Black underground comprised of

militants not yet grown to political maturity, and without a politico-military structure and strategy to merge the Black underground into a national formation employing both stable and mobile urban and rural guerrilla warfare, in conjunction with the rising militancy of the oppressed masses. In the same regard, an objective reality was present, being a historical transition evolving from the civil rights movement; the riotous 1960's; the creation of the BPP chapters in Black communities across the country, which fought bravely against police attacks; the mass mobilization in support of the Vietnamese national liberation war, etc. Hence, the commencement of armed struggle was according to the development of history.

By late 1971, it was ordered for the Black underground to enter a strategic retreat, to reorganize itself and build a national structure, but for many cadres, the call came too late. Many of the most mature militants were already deeply underground, separated from those functioning with the logistics provided by BPP chapters who, in the split, served to support armed struggle. State repression continued to mount, especially since the Black underground was hampered by internal strife with the loss of the above ground

political support apparatus (with virtually no support coming from existing Black community groups and organizations). It should be stated that a major contradiction was developing between the Black underground and Euro-American forces employing armed tactics in support of Vietnamese liberation struggle. By 1973-75, this contradiction became full blown, whereby specific Euro-American revolutionary armed forces refused to give meaningful material and political support to the Black Liberation Movement, more specifically, to the Black Liberation Army. Thereby, in 1974, the Black Liberation Army was without an above ground political support apparatus; logistically and structurally scattered across the country without the means to unite its combat units; abandoned by Euro-American revolutionary armed forces; and being relentlessly pursued



by the State reactionary forces – COINTELPRO (FBI, CIA and local police departments). Thus, it was only a matter of time before the BLA would be virtually decimated as a fighting clandestine organization.

By 1974-75, the fighting capacity of the Black Liberation Army had been destroyed, but the BLA as a politico-military organization had not; those imprisoned continued escape attempts and fought political trials, forging ideological and political theory concerning the building of the Black Liberation Movement and revolutionary armed struggle. The trials of Black Liberation Army members sought to place the State on trial, to condemn the oppressive conditions from which Black people had to eke out an existence in racist America. These trials went on for several years, which the Courts and police used to embellish their position as guardians of society. The

State media publications projected the Black Liberation Army trials as justice being served to protect Black people from terrorism; to prevent these terrorists from starting racial strife between Black and white people; to protect the interest and lives of police who are responsible for the welfare of oppressed communities etc. The captured and confined BLA members were deemed terrorists, criminals, racists, but never revolutionaries, never humanitarians, never political activists. But the undaunted revolutionary fervor of captured BLA members continued to serve the revolution even while imprisoned. By placing the State on trial, the BLA was more able to expose the contradictions between the philosophy of the State to protect the rights of all people, and the actions of the State which only protect the rights of the capitalist-class bourgeoisie. The BLA trials sought to undermine the State attempts to play off the BLA as an insignificant group of crazies, and therefore the trials of BLA members became forums to politicize the masses of what the struggle and revolution is all about. The trials served to organize people to support those being persecuted and prosecuted by the State, as a means from which the oppressed masses would be able to protect themselves for future persecution. In this manner, the trials of the BLA voiced the discontent, dissatisfaction, and disenfranchisement of Black people in racist America.

By late 1975, the Black Liberation Army established a Coordinating Committee, which was essentially comprised of imprisoned members and outside supporters gained during the years of political prosecution in the Courts. The first task of the Coordinating Committee was to distribute an ideological and political document depicting the theoretical foundations of the political determination of the Black Liberation Army. The document, entitled, "A MESSAGE TO THE BLACK MOVEMENT - A Political Statement from the Black Underground," put forth several political premises from which the BLA should be noted as a revolutionary political-military organization fighting for national liberation of African people in the United States.

In late 1975 and 1976, The Coordinating Committee distributed the first BLA newsletter, an organizational publication for the purpose of forging ideological and political clarity and unity between BLA members captured and confined throughout the US. The BLA newsletter began to serve as a means from which BLA members would voice their political understanding of the national liberation struggle, and in this way, for the entire organized body to share in ideas and strengthen our collective political determination as a fighting force. Over the years, the newsletter has served to help develop cadres inside and outside of prisons and to broaden the capacity from which the BLA could continue to serve the national liberation struggle. In 1976, members of the BLA launched a national campaign to petition the United Nations concerning the plight of political prisoners of war, and conditions of the US penal system, on behalf of the prison movement. The UN Prisoners Petition Campaign, initiated and directed by members of the BLA, virtually revitalized the prison movement across the country, and forged impetus to the present Human Rights campaign to the United Nations. It was the UN Prisoners Petition Campaign that

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Mujeres Libres

The Anarchist Women's Movement During The Spanish Revolution

By Aileen O'Carroll

From <http://surf.to/anarchism>

Mujeres Libres (Free Women) were a group of women Anarchists who organized and fought both for women's liberation and an Anarchist revolution during the Spanish Revolution. The work they did is truly inspirational. Their example shows how the struggle against women's oppression and against capitalism can be combined in one fight for freedom.

As Anarchists, they rejected any relegation of women to a secondary position within the libertarian movement. In the 1930s, feminism had a narrower meaning than it does now, and they rejected it as a theory which fought for 'equality of women within an existing system of privileges.' They argued: "We are not, and were not then, feminists. We were not fighting against men. We did not want to substitute a feminist hierarchy for a masculine one. It's necessary to work, to struggle, together because if we don't, we'll never have a social revolution. But we needed our own organization to struggle for ourselves."

"We are aware of the precedents set by both feminist organizations and by the political parties... We could not follow either of these paths. We could not separate the women's problem from the social problem. Nor could we deny the significance of the first by converting women into a simple instrument for any organization, even... our own libertarian organization."

"The intention that underlay our activities was much broader: to serve a doctrine, not a party, to empower women to make of them individuals capable of contributing to the structuring of the future society, individuals who have learned to be self-determining, not to follow blindly the dictates of any organization."

Mujeres Libres had a two pronged strategy of capacitation (preparing) and captation (incorporation or participation). Their early work combined consciousness raising and direct action.

In order to gain mutual support, they created networks of women Anarchists. Attending meetings with one another, they checked out reports of sexist behavior and worked out how to deal with it. Flying day-care centers were set up to involve more women in union activities.

A journal was produced, distributed and advertised via existing Anarchist networks. In it, women reported on what work they were actually doing. Consciousness raising was important, every issue had an article about exceptional women, and they also published a column in other Anarchist magazines. In addition, their journal printed articles on cultural themes, on education, on movies, on sports. Later on, books and pamphlets would supplement the journal.

Propaganda work was carried out via radio broadcasts, traveling libraries and propaganda

tours. One member described her experience: "we would call the women together and explain to them... that there is not a clearly defined role for women, that women should not lose their independence, but that a woman can be a mother and a companera at the same time... Young women would come over to me and say 'this is very interesting. What you're saying, we've heard before. It's something that we've felt, but we didn't know.' The ideas that grabbed them the most? Talk about the power men exercised over women. There would be a kind of uproar when you would

say to them, 'we cannot permit men to think themselves superior to women, that they have a right to rule over them.' I think that Spanish women were waiting anxiously for that call."

Many of Spain's workers and peasants were illiterate. In response, the women of Mujeres Libres set up literacy programs, technically oriented classes, and classes in social studies. Between 600-800 women attended these classes daily in Barcelona in December, 1938. In cooperation with the Anarchist unions, they set up apprenticeship programs.

Hand in hand with producing propaganda came the day-to-day work necessary to defend their revolution from fascist attack. They supplied food to the militias and set up community dining rooms. They organized support for women in militias, setting up shooting ranges and target practice classes. They set up a school for nurses and an emergency medical clinic to treat those injured in the fighting.

Teresina, despite her lack of experience in the medical field was named administrator. Here she speaks with pride of her role: "I remember how many times fathers would come up to me in the clinic to request something and I would say 'please, here all of us are equals.' And they would say to me, 'here, you really have made the revolution.' I had such satisfaction from this. Because I administered the whole thing without any education... What I believed, that's what I put in practice there... and that's what I can tell you of what I did for the revolution. The rest, I did what everyone else did. But this was something I did."

The revolution, however, was more than defeating fascism, it was about building a new society which cared for the needs of all. Traveling

through Catalonia and Aragon, members of Mujeres Libres helped to establish rural collectives. Many women went with representatives of the Anarchist union (CNT) and the Anarchist federation (FAI) with makeshift loud speakers calling on peasants to "come over to our side."

In Barcelona, they ran a lying-in hospital, providing birth and post-natal care for women, and classes on child and maternal health, birth control and sexuality. An institute of Maternal and Childcare named after French Anarchist Louise Michel was set up in Barcelona in February, 1938.



Mujeres Libres provide a living example of many important aspects of Anarchist theory. First, they understood the collective is only as strong as the individuals that make it up. To build a strong Anarchist movement, they encouraged and supported women to fulfil their full potential. Indeed many members of

were only 13 or 14 years old when the revolution started. Yet, like Teresina above, they discovered that they did have the ability to undertake the challenging task of building a new world.

Second, Mujeres Libres understood the importance of direct action and self-activity, both in making revolutionaries and making a revolution. They didn't make an artificial distinction between propaganda and organizing, between ideas and action. Their ideas were formed by their experiences on the ground.

Finally, the Mujeres Libres understood that ideas are never set in stone, to be implemented when the right time comes. Their ideas grew and developed, changed and became influential.

Revolution is a messy business. In order to change society fundamentally, long held ideas about what is normal and natural have to be challenged. New revolutionaries and a new revolutionary society will result from the arguments and debates that are held in many different places – the home, the supermarket, the pub – by many different people.

Mujeres Libres saw the revolution as far more than a single overnight event. It is also a process, continually changing, as disagreements are resolved, and new disputes are identified. They showed that revolution, far from being a dry academic endeavor is like life; never simple and straightforward, but dynamic.

Black August

Would you hang on a cliff's edge sword-sharp slashing fingers while jackboot screws stomp heels on peeled-flesh bones and laugh

"Let go! Die, damn you, die!" could you hang on 20 years, 30 years?

20 years 30 years and more brave Black brothers buried in US concentration camps they hang on

Black light shining in torture chambers Ruchell, Yogi, Sundiata, Sekou Warren, Chip, Seth, Herman, Jalil And more and more they resist: BLACK AUGUST

Nat Turner insurrection chief executed: Black August

Jonathan, George dead in battle's light: Black August

Fred Hampton, Black Panthers African Brotherhood murdered: Black August Kuwasi Balagoon, Nuh Abdul Quyyam captured warriors dead: Black August Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Ella Baker, Ida B. Weels

Queen Mother Moore, their last breaths drawn fighting death: Black August Black August: watchword for Black liberation for human liberation sword to sever the shackles light to lead children of every nation to safety

Black August remembrance resist the amerikkkan nightmare For life.

Marilyn Buck, Anti-imperialist political prisoner. Black August 2000 (see page 20 for Marilyn's contact info!)

Land and Freedom...

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of civilian rule, there have been over a thousand deaths emanating from land conflicts in Brazil. Almost without exception, these crimes enjoy complete impunity. The most infamous of these cases to date, took place on April 17, 1996. Nineteen landless workers were massacred by the military police during a demonstration at Eldorado dos Carajás, in the northern state of Pará.

What is most remarkable about the *Movimento Sem Terra* is its capacity to organize and mobilize rural workers. The logistics of the congress, for example, required transportation, shelter, food, and childcare for thousands of those representing the most marginalized sectors of society.

The perceived threat of the MST emanates from the power of its example to the rest of Brazilian civil society. In a 'post-modern', 'unipolar', and globalised world order, the demands of landless rural workers and their urban allies remain class-based, modernist and very material: theirs is a struggle for social inclusion, and for complete socio-economic citizenship.

International Solidarity:

★ **Donations:** tax-deductible donations for the MST can be made through the Global Exchange. Send checks made payable to 'Global Exchange/MST' to: Global Exchange, 2017 Mission St. #303, San Francisco, California 94110.

★ For more information on the MST, visit: www.mstbrazil.org (English) www.mst.org.br (Portuguese)

★ For updates on events and urgent actions, join

MST Manifesto...

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social investments should be established, in order to create jobs and increase the purchasing power of the population.

Finally, there is no economic or social reason that impedes every Brazilian having access to land, work, dignified housing, quality public schools, and food. But we need to have the courage to change our government, rethink economic policy and challenge the profits of the powerful.

The following months and years will be decisive for the future of our country. Either we regain our national sovereignty or we will be condemned to be a new colony of the US government, which even has its eye on the Amazon region.

That's why, as a social movement of landless rural workers, we urge all Brazilian popular organisations to organise themselves and fight for these changes.

We need to demand the setting up of a CPI (an inquest commission) in order to investigate the cases of cases of corruption, which have engulfed the higher echelons of the government. We propose that everyone take part in the popular plebiscite against the payment of foreign debt, which is to be carried out during the 'Week of the Nation', from the 2nd to the 7th of September. We need to defeat this government and the rich in the next elections, and to elect progressive candidates, which are truly committed to a Popular Project. In every home, every workplace, every school, every trade union, and every parish, we need to discuss a Popular Project for Brazil.

And we must continue struggling, always.

Every social conquest has been the result of massive, popular struggles. Together with the Brazilian people, we hope to construct a Popular Project – a project that will regain our national sovereignty, our dignity and the well being of all the population.

A strong embrace, in solidarity. Delegates of the 4 National Congress of the MST.

Brasília – DF, August 11, 2000.

Chiapas...

continued from page 3

to question what he meant by the situation being resolved. The fact that the American embassy completely avoided discussing how the accords are linked to US interests illustrates how the government wants to avoid issues of how free trade erodes democracy and subjugates citizens of other countries to the will of American commerce.

I couldn't help thinking about this link between the indigenous struggle for autonomy and the globalization of capitalism as I sat on a porch

in Acteal, site of the 1998 massacre of 45 Las Abejas (the bees) members, indigenous supporters of the accords and allies of the Zapatistas. I was in front of a building they use as a town hall. It was made of wooden planks and was one of the few buildings that had electricity. The community was abuzz with preparations for a newly inaugurated, yearly celebration, "the festival of Saint Peter, martyr of the displaced of Acteal." Everything was strewn with colorful garlands, the women had made heaps of tortillas, and there were two bands playing, one with quite an intimidating sound system. As I sat, observing the preparations and anticipation, a few men rushed excitedly down the wood and earthen stairs carved into the steep hillside. They were bringing in important supplies for the celebration, cases and cases of coke and manzanita, an apple soda manufactured by coca-cola. I couldn't help thinking about the small pox infected blankets, which had been given to North American Indians decades before.

Manifest destiny has a new form in Chiapas. It is more insidious and P.R. savvy than its predecessor, but its end goal is still the acquisition of Native American lands for the profit of Western powers, and its end effect is still the loss of Native American lives and culture. Advocates of the neo-liberal model of economics back up their position with a lot of precise theory, but fail to deal with reality because they can not conceive or make room for cultures that don't function on the basic assumptions of a capitalistic society. The need for "Land and Freedom" is a reality that neo-liberal theory arrogantly dismisses in the quest for fulfillment of first-world ideology. I like to think that the "Zapata" tag on the steps was scrawled by someone during the 1994 Zapatista occupation of San Cristobal as they looked over the city some night; that their knowledge of, and link with the past gave them the undeniable knowledge that the liberty of all people has a validity that no neo-liberal theory or undemocratic society can illegitimize.

Yvonne Sorovac is an activist from Richmond, VA. This article was based on a Witness For Peace delegation that she was part of in May of 2000. You can contact her at P.O. Box 5021, Richmond, VA 23220 USA or ratsoup@hotmail.com

Black Liberation Army

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first called for an international investigation into the conditions of US prisons, and called for the release of political prisoners of war to a non-imperialist country that would accept them. (Consequently, another national campaign has been launched entitled "National POW Amnesty Campaign.") Lastly, in 1976-77, the Coordinating Committee distributed what had been termed a Study Guide to captured members of the BLA as a means to consolidate the ideological perspectives from which the BLA would provide political leadership to the national liberation struggle.

Since 1974, the BLA has provided ideological and political perspectives within the Black Liberation Movement, and in this way gave leadership to the movement. Although, the Black Liberation Army is still lacking in principle support by progressive forces throughout the country. The primary aspect of lack of support is because the BLA still calls for the need for armed struggle, and the building of a revolutionary armed front. The Black Liberation Army is a politico-military organization which has served to develop the political mass movement to merge with the political determination of the Black underground. The merger is based upon the development of a national politico-military strategy in unity with the aspirations and strategic initiatives of the various political organizations throughout the country. Consistently, the BLA has called for the development of the Black Liberation Front or Black United Front, a united front of Black revolutionary nationalists, establishing the political determination of the class and national liberation struggle towards independence, and for the freeing of the land. At this stage in struggle, there are several areas of progress be-

ing formulated that may serve to strengthen, consolidate, and mobilize the national liberation struggle under the aspirations of the oppressed Black masses. The building of the African National Prisoners Organization is a positive step in which various progressive Black forces can develop principled working relationships, alliances, and coalitions, and further build the Black Liberation Front. In the same regard, the development of the National Black Human Rights Coalition, provides a means from which a greater number of Black organizations and groups representing oppressed Black masses can be educated, organized and mobilized to confront racist, capitalist-imperialism, in conjunction with the heightened struggles in Namibia and Azania, and human rights violations here in the US. But it is imperative that these new formations develop a struggle line that supports the need for armed struggle

to be waged in the United States, and therefore support of the oldest revolutionary armed force in North America - the Black Liberation Army.

It is almost 1980, and the Black Liberation Army (the Black underground) has been in existence for over ten years. The last ten years have been hard years of struggle; we've lost many Comrades and made many mistakes, but we have never lied nor compromised our principles in struggle. The growth and development of the BLA depends on the growth and development of the entire class and national liberation struggle. The means from which the BLA can build revolutionary armed struggle is based upon the willingness of the oppressed masses to support the BLA, to call for the BLA to act, to build areas of support at work, home and in social places of entertainment, but most of all among the political organizations, and

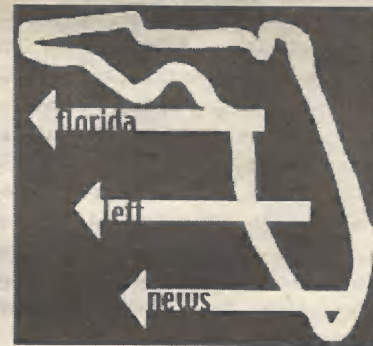
groups that the oppressed masses are affiliated with. It is essential that the general mass and popular movement understand the need for revolutionary armed struggle/forces to exist, and that the existence of the BLA is the criteria from which the class and national liberation struggle will be preserved, as the socio-economic conditions of the US monopoly-capitalism worsens, and as racist repression intensifies.

As mentioned earlier, another national political campaign has been launched. This new campaign calls for the release and/or exchange of captured members of the Black underground and other revolutionary forces across the country. But the principle objective of this campaign must be understood: to build support for revolutionary armed struggle, employing international law and politics (specifically, Protocols of the Geneva Accords) concerning the existence of political prisoners of war in the United States. Thereby, supporting the release of political prisoners of war brings understanding of how these revolutionaries came to be imprisoned, and the need for them to be released, as well as the need for revolutionary armed struggle. This is the challenge in uniting the mass and popular movements under the auspices of building the Black Liberation Front. It can only be objectively realized by supporting the re-emergence of the Black underground, the Black Liberation Army.

SUPPORT THE BLACK LIBERATION ARMY! BUILD THE NATIONAL POW AMNESTY CAMPAIGN! FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS OF WAR!

(Addendum: Since the original writing of this brief historical account of the BPP-BLA, Assata Shakur was liberated, and BLA soldiers were captured during the Nyack Brinks armored car expropriation.) (Originally written on September 18, 1979, and printed in *Arm the Spirit*, the first national revolutionary prisoners newspaper.)

The first part of this article appeared in *ONWARD #1* and is still available from us. This article in its entirety is available in booklet form from Jacksonville ABCF (see page 18). See page 20 for the contact information of Jalil and other BLA POWs. Thanks to Jalil for allowing us to reprint this! -- eds.



The Florida Left List is a moderated news, announcements and discussion list for progressives, anarchists, anarcho-punk, democratic socialists, Wobblies, Marxists, Greens, pacifists, peace and social justice advocates, environmentalists, feminists, animal rights activists, queer activists and activists and leftists of all other tendencies in Florida. This list is also open to those who don't identify their political knowledge. The purpose of the list is information sharing and to build cooperation and mutual aid amongst the radical, anti-capitalist left in Florida. The focus is on activism, direct action, the struggles of oppressed groups and Florida and national issues. Averages 10 messages a day (sometimes more). Serving the Left in Florida since May 4, 1999 and now more than 300 subscribers strong.

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Beyond the Whiteness: Global Capitalism and White Supremacy

Thoughts on Movement Building and Anti-Racist Organizing

By Chris Crass

One of the most exciting developments to come out of the mass actions - in Seattle, Washington DC, Windsor, Canada, Philadelphia and Los Angeles - is the movement-wide discussion about racism, white supremacy and organizing strategies to build a multiracial radical movement for global justice. Elizabeth 'Betita' Martinez's widely distributed essay, "Where Was the Color in Seattle," put forward the question: why, if global capitalism has the greatest negative impact on people of color worldwide, was the direct action against the WTO so overwhelming white? Her essay helped launch a dialogue in alternative media and in activists groups throughout the United States and beyond.

Among activists of color, the question has generally been "how can we bring an analysis of global capitalism and global justice to our local organizing efforts?" White activists have responded to Betita's essay by asking themselves, "how can we get people of color to join our groups and movement?" But this isn't the most useful question that we should be asking. The question to struggle with is "How can we be anti-racist activists dedicated to bringing down white supremacy?" White activists need to work on developing our understanding of white supremacy, how white privilege operates in the activist movement and how we can bring a solid anti-racist politics to the work that we do.

The idea that we just need to get more people of color to join our groups is a way white activists have internalized white supremacy. It carries the idea that we have all the answers and now they just need to be delivered to people of color. The alternative, of course, would be something like, people of color have been organizing for a long time (500+ years), and we (white activists) have a lot to learn, so maybe we should find ways to form alliances, relationships, and coalitions to work with people of color and be prepared to learn as well as share.

The other major aspect of 'how can we get more people of color to join our group' is the idea that anti-racist consciousness develops through osmosis - i.e. if white people sit in the same room as people of color, we will begin to understand how white supremacy operates and therefore won't really need to talk about it. It must be clear that multiracial doesn't automatically mean anti-racist. The US military is multiracial in composition, but clearly serves the interests of imperialism and white supremacy. Similarly, an anti-racist group of whites can work to end white supremacy. What we are envisioning is a consciously anti-racist and multiracial movement against global capitalism.

There is truth to the idea that white people learn about racism through interactions and relationships with people of color. But in terms of how we plan to do this work in activism, our goal cannot be to bring in people of color and expect that they will school us. Organizers of color have enough work already. In our pursuit to get educated, we need to go to more events and actions organized by people of color and show support, listen and learn. We need to read the amazing writers that are out there. We can pay attention to how the system works (when we are in jail, in court, in classrooms, at work and on the street). We can build relationships and learn from each other. But, just as men cannot expect women to educate them about sexism and heteros cannot expect queers to give them the homophobia 101 class whenever it is deemed appropriate. White people have a responsibility to work on racism together and not just wait until a person of color brings it up.

Here's an example of this dynamic. Men in Food Not Bombs (the group I've worked with) would often talk about sexism in terms of how can we get more women taking on more responsibility and create equal power. The conversations would sometimes turn to questions like, How can we check our behavior that is preventing women from taking on responsibility? And, What kind of internal culture do we have and how does it privilege men and keep women down? These conversations about what men should do were very useful - as men should worry less about what women are and aren't doing and more about what they as men are and aren't doing. The women in the group are just as capable, just as responsible, just as intelligent, once men stop occupying all of the space and learn to share power. Men worrying less about appeasing women and more about ending sexism is what must happen.

This is how we need to think about racism. Too often I hear white activists talk about why more people of color aren't in the group, rather than whether or not we really have an understanding of how deeply racism impacts the issues we're working on and if there are organizations and activists of color already working on these issues so that we can form working relationships.

White supremacy is a system of power. The definition of white supremacy that I use comes from Sharon Martin and the Challenging White Supremacy Workshop. White supremacy is a historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent; for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege. White supremacy operates through racial oppression against people of color: slavery, genocide, anti-immigration, driving while Black, etc. Along with white privilege to white people: not being thought of as a criminal every time you walk into a store,

for example. All the while, white supremacy, maintains real power for the ruling class who control the major institutions of society.

The impact white supremacy has on white folks is rarely looked at, especially in relationship to activism and organizing. White privilege means that white people don't have to think about racism. White privilege means that white people can think of themselves as normal and generalize universally that what they experience is the standard. White privilege is a major barrier to activism and has historically undermined radical multiracial and anti-racist movement building. An example is white radicals organizing actions that involve possible arrest without thinking about how people of color have a very different relationship to the police - i.e. police brutality is a daily reality in communities of color and people of color are treated different at the hands of police generally speaking. White privilege often leads to white activists thinking that their way of organizing is the only way to organize and that their tactics are the most radical tactics.

Activist Helen Luu wrote about the whiteness of the WTO protests as well as the left/Anarchist movement generally. Luu looked at how middle class white activists often have the privilege to choose issues and tactics and that they generally have less to lose by engaging in activism. People of color, on the other hand, generally must focus their activism on survival issues - i.e. police brutality, housing, welfare rights, environmental toxins next door - that impact their lives and communities in concrete ways. Luu argues we need to rethink the way we define activism and I would argue that white radicals must seriously examine how we talk about issues and tactics, in terms of what is deemed militant and/or radical, in relationship to how white supremacy operates.

Because white privilege undermines solidarity, white activists can be "blinded by the white." By this, I mean white activists often fail to comprehend the implications of communities of color organizing and building their capacities to fight to get toxins out of their neighborhood, for improved public transportation, for accountable public schools, for an end to police violence, for an end to INS deportation. The system of white supremacy defines white people as human, and people of color as inferior, subhuman, marginal - underserving of services, let alone basic human rights.

The racially coded public discussions of social policies illustrate the contempt white society has for people of color: fear of 'brown bodies' crossing 'white borders' with 'illegitimate and illegal brown babies' sucking up 'white tax dollars' in 'Black controlled welfare departments' of 'inner cities where welfare queen mothers raise the next generation of juvenile crime delinquents.'

The discussion around organizing and anti-racism was taken up by Jason Wade and Steve Stewart, in their article, "The Battle for our Lives" in the Anarchist journal the *Arsenal*. They argue that activists/organizers must develop analysis that connects sweatshop labor in Indonesia to sweatshop labor in the United States and demonstrate that global capitalism creates misery in the third world as well as in the US. They write, "We need to take the momentum from the anti-global capitalism struggles and connect them with struggles against police brutality, for health care, against welfare cutbacks, for better access to education, struggles that grow from our neighborhoods and build a serious revolutionary critique, vision and movement to redistribute power back to our everyday lives... We have to struggle around these 'everyday life' issues if we hope to build a more multiracial movement."

With this in mind, white activists need to think about anti-racist organizing in at least a couple of ways. One, white privilege is the flipside of racial oppression and each must be challenged if we are to move towards equality. Two, when people of color oppose racism they are also re-affirming their humanity in a social order that denies this and that is why struggles around racism have been such catalysts for revolutionary social change as they challenge the very foundation of this society - white supremacy. White radicals need to think about ways of talking about and organizing against white privilege - in the predominately white sectors of the movement and white society in general. It's also important for white radicals to remember that organizing against racism is also about freeing our own humanity from the grip of the slave society.

White radicals also need to think about how we go about forming working relationships with people of color. Gloria Anzaldúa, queer Chicana author/activist, writes about how white activists often talk about helping other people - helping the people at Big Mountain, the farm workers, indigenous communities working to keep toxins out of their neighborhoods, political prisoners, etc. Anzaldúa writes, as they (white folks) learn our histories and understand our struggles, "They will come to see that they are not helping us but following our lead." This is a major distinction - no white savior coming to make it all better, but rather white allies working in solidarity with people of color in a way that respects leadership and builds trust and respect.

White activists must find ways to show solidarity and act as allies with people of color. It's not about helping other people with their issues or acting from a sense of guilt, but rather taking

responsibility for racial injustice and recognizing how we are impacted by the issues. As Black feminist author/activist Barbara Smith says, "In political struggles there wouldn't be any 'your' and 'my' issues, if we saw each form of oppression as integrally linked to the others."

This is an exciting time with great possibilities. We need to be ready to make mistakes, make hard decisions and experiment with anti-racist organizing that really does aim at challenging white supremacy while confronting global capitalism.

In doing our work, it is important to have vision and hold on to it. The movement I want to be a part of is: multiracial and anti-racist - absolutely dedicated to self-determination for all oppressed people and ending white supremacy; feminist with a commitment to develop new social relationships based on equality and bring down the social structures based on domination; queer liberationist with a commitment to challenging heterosexism and creating freedom to safely define our own sexualities and genders; multigenerational and full of energy, wisdom and a desire to make healthy communities for all of us to care for and learn from each other; anti-capitalist with a deep analysis of how the system deforms and dehumanizes us joined with a vision of a new order based on social cooperation and ecological sustainability; and democratic with a passion for collective liberation and empowerment, along with an eye for organizing strategies that have direct action, collective action and solidarity building at their core. Together we can, forever we must.

Suggested Reading:

- Maria Mies. *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labor*. Zed Books, 1986.
- Lydia Potts. *The World Labour Market: A History of Migration*. Zed Books, 1990.
- Nancy Naples, ed. *Community Activism and Feminist Politics: Organizing Across Race, Class and Gender*. Routledge, 1998.
- Elizabeth 'Betita' Martinez. *De Colores Means All Of Us: Latina Views for a Multi-Colored Century*. South End Press, 1998.
- Larry R. Salomon. *Roots of Justice: Stories of Organizing in Communities of Color*. Chardon Press, 1998.
- Robert Allen. *Reluctant Reformers: Racism and Social Reform Movements in the United States*. Howard University Press, 1974.
- Charles M. Payne. *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*. University of California Press, 1995.
- M. Annette Jaimes, ed. *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance*. South End Press, 1992.
- Karin Aguilar-San Juan, ed. *The State of Asian America: Activism and Resistance in the 1990s*. South End Press, 1994.
- David R. Roediger, ed. *Black on White: Black Writers on What it Means to Be White*. Schocken Books, 1998.

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Alliance Building

By Sundiata Acoli,
New Afrikan Prisoner of War

What we're really talking about here is whites building alliances with people of color.

I can't speak for all people of color, but for the Black masses, the main problem is racism—the worldwide system of white supremacy at home and abroad, headed by US imperialism.

Whites are the main beneficiaries of racism. So the real struggle against racism involves whites giving up the special benefits they derive from racial oppression of people of color, in exchange for joining the rest of humanity in building a better world for all people that we all want.

The key to whites building alliances with the Black masses is to put and keep the issue of racism—the worldwide system of white domination, suppression and exploitation of people of color—on the front burner and to fight against racism in all its manifestations at home and abroad.

White alliances with people of color will be more effective in the next period if whites:

- 1) Recognize that barriers that exist between whites and people of color stem primarily from each side's long history of being on opposite ends of the effect of racism.
- 2) Since whites are from the side exercising racial domination and privilege, both people of color and whites must take precautions that these tendencies don't reproduce themselves in alliances.
- 3) Talk, communicate, exchange views frankly and consult with people of color and their representatives to come up with the best ways to form and maintain alliances, also consult with people of color early on when their participation is needed.
- 4) Follow the lead of people of color and their representatives on issues of main concern to them—or leave it alone.
- 5) Focus on organizing in the white community as opposed to preferring to organize in communities of color—unless invited.
- 6) Give preference to direct action over rallies, self-defense over non-violence and thinking globally, acting locally.

(see page 20 for Sundiata's contact info!)

ANARCHIST PERSPECTIVES ON VOTING

Never Mind the Ballots

By the Sabate Collective

The fake democracy that the ruling class uses to control us will prove once again this Fall that we have no voice in their political game. Corporate sponsorship of political events, donations to campaigns and enormous lobbying efforts have disenfranchised us, and still, the bureaucrats, politicians, and capitalists continue to campaign with the fervor of used car salesmen, badgering us to vote for their candidate. With the presidential election fast approaching, the charade continues and the insanity increases. The Democrats yell at us, warning of impending evil should we vote for Green Party candidate, Ralph Nader. According to these hacks, every vote for Nader solidifies George W's chances of making it into office, which, they claim, would actually mean different policies than Gore. More progressive liberals like the Greens rant about Al Gore and his wrongdoings, proclaiming that voting for Nader can actually bring positive change.

We should have no more illusions about our democracy. The political system of a capitalist society like ours has one major function; to enforce property relations between the ruling class and the rest of us. Consequently, a vote for any candidate is a vote for not only our continued exploitation but also for increased and expanded misery throughout the world. Our choices in this election, as in the past ones, are meaningless because our vote (no matter who it is for) will be a vote for more of the same - institutionalized racism, sexism, cutbacks, police, wars, prisons and ecological destruction.

Certainly, the most important thing to recognize amidst all this political fury is that, at no time in history, has positive social change been

achieved by the election of a politician. In fact, all laws and policies enacted by politicians that aren't in the ruling class's interest come into being because we put enough pressure on them through our struggles in our neighborhoods, and workplaces. Elections are simply the ratification of hard fought for victories through social struggle. When we organize ourselves along truly democratic lines - by taking grassroots initiative, refusing leaders and personality cults, using open and participatory methods that put us on a face to face level - to struggle for improvements in our lives, and even to further radical demands we possess a power that is frightening to the ruling class. If we take that organizing further and create serious economic and political consequences we can make demands and see to it that they are achieved! This is our historic realm - not theirs - and we should not compromise in these situations. The ability of the politicians to spin-doctor and speak to our concerns in a seemingly genuine way should not be underestimated. Remember, 'they will always promise us heaven before the elections, and give us hell after them'!

Appearing before us like a two-headed monster, George W. and Al Gore have dispensed with nearly all attempts at upholding the illusion that they represent different politics. Having both received significant and similar amounts of bribes from the same corporations and organizations, it should come as no surprise that they stand on the same side of about 90% of the issues. They are unanimous in their support for the laws and policies that will continue to keep us down; use of the death penalty, welfare reform, tough on crime legislation, militarized borders and murderous immigration policies, wage decreases,

HMO control of our health, increased military spending, decreased social spending, rollbacks on environmental protection, and we know the list could go on.

While Nader tends to stand out with his rhetoric of a 'fair' minimum wage and free healthcare coverage for everyone, there is next to no chance at all (even if he were elected) that those kind of laws would ever pass. We might well face the national guard before congress would concede such needed and costly benefits. The main difference between these politicians lies in their strategy to maintain a stable class society. The only difference between Democrats and Republicans is that the Democrats have a little more fear of the working class. We can see this in the more conciliatory approach that both Clinton and Gore have taken with their policies. Gore's speech is

The Democrats and even more progressive liberals like the Greens take a social democratic strategy to maintain both their power and capitalist stability to keep us content. They throw us crumbs while more severe measures are passed right over our heads and behind our backs. The Republicans use no such pretense. Their strategy is to push us to our absolute limits and when we defend ourselves against their attacks, they are prepared with prisons, the National Guard and brutal cops. As divergent as these strategies are, the results are the same.

Rather than willingly grant any of these criminals the authority to rule over us we should force them to concede to our needs and desires by raising the social cost in the streets. Class struggle brings change with fewer compromises and in less time. Whether those changes are improve-

They will always promise us heaven before the elections, and give us hell after them!

laced with well-crafted statements about his allegiance to the poor of this country but if one looks closely at the policies that have passed while Gore has sat as VP, you begin to see a different story. Nationally, welfare benefits have been rolled back with devastating results. Their tough-on-crime legislation and zero tolerance drug policy has ended up putting more people behind bars than even before. Access to abortions has been reduced to hospitals and clinics in only 14% of US counties. If any of these repressive measures had been introduced under Republican leadership we would've been in the streets every weekend, but when a Democrat signs them into law, we accept it as the best deal possible.

ments in our struggle to survive or changes that take aim at the whole system with the intent of replacing it with a more equitable libertarian society will depend on our demands in the street, not the candidate in the office.

The Sabate Anarchist Collective is named after Francisco Sabate, the famous Spanish Anarchist guerilla. We are a Boston-based Anarchist collective affiliated with the NEFAC (Northeast Federation of Anarchist Communists). For more information about NEFAC contact Prole Revolt at PO Box 563 Morgantown, WV 26507. We can be contacted at Sabate36@juno.com or at PO Box 230685 Boston, MA 02123

Will Voting for Radical Parties Be Effective?

There is no doubt that voting can lead to changes in policies, which can be a good thing as far as it goes. But such policies are formulated and implemented within the authoritarian framework of the hierarchical capitalist state — a framework which itself is never open to challenge by voting. To the contrary, voting legitimates the state framework, ensuring that social change will be mild, gradual, and reformist rather than rapid and radical. Indeed, the "democratic" process will (and has) resulted in all successful political parties becoming committed to "more of the same" or tinkering with the details at best (which is usually the limits of any policy changes).

Therefore, given the need for radical systemic changes as soon as possible due to the exponentially accelerating crises of modern civilisation, working for gradual reforms within the electoral system must be seen as a potentially deadly tactical error. In addition, it can never get to the root causes of our problems. Anarchists reject the idea that our problems can be solved by the very institutions that cause them in the first place! What happens in our communities, workplaces and environment is too important to be left to politicians - or the ruling elite who control governments.

Because of this, anarchists reject political parties and electioneering. Electioneering has always been the death of radicalism. Political parties are only radical when they don't stand a chance of election. However, many social activists continue to try to use elections, participating in the system that disempowers the majority and create the social problems they are protesting against.

"It should be a truism that elections empower the politicians and not the voters," Brian Martin writes, "yet many social movements continually are drawn into electoral politics." There are a number of reasons for this. "One is the involvement of party members in social movements. Another is the aspirations for power and influence by leaders in movements. Having the ear of a government minister is a heady sensation for many; getting elected to parliament oneself is even more of an ego boost. What is forgotten in all this 'politics of influence' is the effect on ordinary activists." ["Democracy without Elections", *Reinventing Anarchy, Again*, Howard J. Ehrlich (ed.), p. 125]

Rudolph Bahro gives an example of how working "within the system" disempowered grassroots Green activists in Germany during the early eighties, pointing out that the coalitions into which the Greens entered with Social Democrats in the German legislature often had the effect of strengthening the status quo by co-opting those whose energies might otherwise have gone into more radical and effective forms of activism [Building the Green Movement, New Society Publishers, 1986].

No doubt the state is more complicated than the simple "executive committee of the ruling class" pictured by Marxists. There are continual struggles both within and without the state bureaucracies, struggles that influence policies and empower different groups of people. Because of this, many radical parties believe that it makes sense to work within the state — for example, to obtain

labour, consumer, and environmental protection laws. However, this reasoning ignores the fact that the organisational structure of the state is not neutral.

To quote Martin again: "The basic anarchist insight is that the structure of the state, as a centralised administrative apparatus, is inherently flawed from the point of view of human freedom and equality. Even though the state can be used occasionally for valuable ends, as a means the state is flawed and impossible to reform. The nonreformable aspects of the state include, centrally, its monopoly over 'legitimate' violence and its consequent power to coerce for the purpose of war, internal control, taxation and the protection of property and bureaucratic privilege.

"The problem with voting is that the basic premises of the state are never considered open for debate, much less challenge. The state's monopoly over the use of violence for war is never at issue. Neither is the state's use of violence against revolt from within. The state's right to extract economic resources from the population is never questioned. Neither is the state's guarantee of either private property (under capitalism) or bureaucratic prerogative (under state socialism) — or both" [Op Cit., p. 127]

But, some say, if a new political group is radical enough, it will be able to use state power for good purposes. Let us consider a specific case: that of the Greens, many of whom believe that the

best way to achieve their aims is to work within the representative political system. By using electioneering to achieve change, Green parties necessarily commit themselves to formulating their proposals as legislative agendas. But once legislation is passed, the coercive mechanisms of the state will be needed to enforce it. Therefore, Green parties are committed to upholding state power. And, ecologists, feminists, and peace activists — who are key constituencies of the Green movement — all need to dismantle hierarchies and domination in order to achieve their respective aims. Therefore, since the state is not only the largest and most powerful hierarchy but also serves to maintain the hierarchical form of all major institutions in society (since this form is the most suitable for achieving ruling-class interests), the state itself is the main obstacle to the success of key constituencies of the Green movement. Hence it is impossible in principle for a par-

liamentary Green party to achieve essential objectives of the Green movement. A similar argument would apply to any radical party whose main emphasis was social justice, which like the goals of feminists, radical ecologists, and peace activists, depends on dismantling hierarchies.

And surely no one who even is remotely familiar with history will suggest that 'radical' politicians, even if by some miracle they were to obtain a majority in the national legislature, might dismantle the state. It should be axiomatic by now that when a 'radical' politician (e.g. a Lenin) says to voters, "Give me and my party state power and we will 'wither away'" it's just more campaign rhetoric (in Lenin's case, the ultimate campaign promise), and hence not to be taken seriously. And radical parties are under pressure from economic and state bureaucracies that ensure that even a sincere radical party would be powerless to introduce significant reforms.

The only real response to the problems of representative democracy is to urge people not to vote. This can be a valuable way of making others aware of the limitations of the current system, which is a necessary condition for their seriously considering the anarchist alternative.

For more Anarchist perspectives on voting (and many other topics) go to: www.anarchistfaq.org

GRANTS FOR RADICAL WRITERS

The Institute for Anarchist Studies awards grants of up to \$4,000 twice a year to support written works that contribute to a critical understanding of social domination and/or attempt to draw out a reconstructive vision of a free society.

Applications are due by either December 15 or May 15 of each year. For more information and to obtain an application, send a SASE to the Institute for Anarchist Studies or visit our website.

INSTITUTE FOR ANARCHIST STUDIES

P.O. Box 1664, Peter Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009
<http://home.newyorknet.net/ias/Default.htm> send



ABCF

ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS FEDERATION

"Any movement that do not support their political internees is a sham movement!"

-Ojore Lutalo

Anarchists on trial in Oregon

On June 16th at 1:30 AM, Jeffery Luers and Craig Marshall were stopped by Springfield Police near an Albertson's market, for a "routine traffic violation". The car they were driving in had a headlight out.

When their licenses were called in, the Eugene Police Department (EDP), who arrested Luers a night earlier for videotaping EDP officers while they harassed punks, ordered them to be held until they could get there.

After being detained for two hours, the EPD showed up and the two were detained until 8 AM, when they were transported to the Lane County Jail, and booked in on charges of Criminal Mischief and Arson 1. The EPD told media the next day that they were being held on suspicion of an arson that had occurred at the time of their arrest at a car dealership in Eugene, which resulted in \$40,000 of damage. They reported that the car the two were driving was followed from the scene of the crime to Springfield. Springfield Police say the car was pulled over for "a routine traffic violation." (The missing headlight).

The next day, the EPD obtained a warrant from a judge to search Luers' residence for specific common household items, including empty plastic containers, sponges, incense sticks, matches, rubber bands, paint, gasoline, and correspondence to both of them. Another resident was detained for 2 hours and questioned, and the BATF was identified at the scene.

On June 19, unidentified agents visited a local activist household looking for three "dangerous terrorists". Surveillance of that house and others, by both the EPD and federal agencies has become more common. Known anarchists have been followed and the Growers' Market Building has been almost constantly surveilled by EPD officers.

A week later, Jeff and Craig's original charges were trumped up to 9 felonies and one misdemeanor. A county Grand Jury indicted them on Friday, June 23. The charges that were not related to the car dealership fire were pertaining to a suspicious fire that never ignited at an oil company in the Whiteaker neighborhood - a scenario that would have posed great danger to the neighborhood and all of Jeff and Craig's closest friends.

Both activists have been visible and active in forest protection campaigns, local CopWatch activities, and projects like Food Not Bombs, cooperative child care, and self-defense. They were both known to the EPD as activists.

Warchest Art Raffle II

In the last issue of Onwards, we told readers about the Warchest Program which sends regular financial aid to PP/POWs.

In an effort to support this program which has supported PP/POWs over the last 6 years, PP/POWs have donated their artwork to be raffled off. All funds raised from this raffle are directed back into the Warchest program.

Our first Warchest Art Raffle helped raise hundreds of dollars for the program. Prizes included a huge color chalk portrait of the Native American warrior Geronimo created by POW Oscar Lopez Rivera and two framed/signed poems by BLA PP Jihad Abdul Mumit.

We have started another raffle. This years prizes include a framed art piece by recently released PPLaura Whitehorn, a quilted wall hanging by recently released Puerto Rican POW Carmen Valentin and two beaded necklace/ear ring sets beaded by PP Ray Luc Levasseur.

Tickets are \$5 each or \$40 for ten. Please get in touch with Jacksonville ABCF for information on buying tickets, or becoming a ticket distributor.

These are the charges:

The following charges relate to a fire that occurred June 16th, at the Joe Romania car dealership in Eugene (The first two charges carry a penalty under Oregon's measure 11 mandatory minimum sentencing guidelines of 70 months each)

Count 1: CLASS A FELONY - Arson in the 1st Degree, for damage to Joe Romania's Truck Dealership by starting a fire that led to an explosion,

Count 2: CLASS A FELONY - Arson in the 1st Degree, for reckless endangerment of damage to ODOT vehicles at 2141 E. 15th, not exceeding \$50,000 (The ODOT lot is across the street from the car dealership!),

Count 3: CLASS C FELONY - Criminal Mischief in the 1st Degree, for damage to a motor vehicle not exceeding \$750.00,

Count 4: CLASS C FELONY - Unlawful Manufacture of a Destructive Device for knowingly assembling a bomb with an incendiary device,

Count 5: CLASS C FELONY - Unlawful Possession of a destructive device.

The following charges relate to an attempted arson on May 27th at Tyree Oil Company at 101 Blair Blvd. In Eugene:

Count 6: CLASS B FELONY - Attempting to start a fire, putting life in danger,

Count 7: CLASS B FELONY - Same as Count 6, but names truck,

Count 8: CLASS A MISDEMEANOR - Criminal Mischief,

Count 9: CLASS C FELONY - Manufac-

@ Prisoner, Mark Barnsley

Several Anarchist Black Cross groups internationally have been supporting Mark Barnsley. Some who have been supportive of ABCF efforts over the years have asked us to pass on information about him.

Mark was an anarchist activist in the U.K. who was attacked, beaten over the head with a bottle, and stabbed by a gang of about 15 intoxicated students. In the course of the attack, one of the students dropped the knife they had attacked Mark with. Mark picked up the knife and continued to try and escape. All the while the students continued to attack him. All independent prosecution witnesses, forensic evidence as well as 2 of the attacking students all confirm that Mark never attacked the students with the knife and injuries they suffered were caused by their constant attack on Mark while he was trying to hold and keep the knife away from the students. Yet Mark was the only one charged with anything. He received a 12 year sentence. Since his imprisonment he has continued to be harassed.

He is currently amongst the general prison population (not in segregation)

In April this year Mark was beaten up, along with 6 other prisoners while at Long Lartin and charged with 'barricading a cell'.

After being moved from prison to prison for nearly 5 months he was briefly moved to Wakefield, where an adjudication (kagaroo court) was held over the incident. Long Lartin screws blatantly lied about what had happened and Mark was subsequently found guilty of 'barricading a cell door'. The result being that he will spend an extra 3 weeks in prison through lost remission.

In their eagerness to rush this process through, HMP Long Lartin have acted unlawfully throughout, withholding evidence from the prisoners' lawyers which would show clearly that Mark and the other prisoners were in fact locked in a cell and then beaten by screws. In the long

ture of Bomb,

Count 10: CLASS C FELONY - Possession of Destructive Device.

The maximum penalty if Craig and Jeffery are found guilty of all charges could be up to 86 years.

They have pled NOT GUILTY to all the charges.

Written correspondence, including photocopied materials with no staples, are admitted in as mail. Books must be sent in brand new, and must be sent FROM THE PUBLISHER. THEY REALLY WANT BOOKS, especially Jeffrey (Free), so if you are a publisher, please mail them in. The jail has ultimate discretion over what books are allowed in.

PLEASE WRITE TO:

Jeffrey Luers #1306729
101 W. 5th Street
Eugene, Oregon 97401

Craig Marshall #1340996

101 W. 5th Street
Eugene, Oregon 97401

What can you do? Organize a benefit and/or donate money for their legal defense, their jail fund for stamps and collect calls to jail support, so they can receive moral support from friends. Please send money to:

O.U.R. Credit Union

C/o Free & Critter Legal Defense Fund
P.O. Box 11922

Eugene, OR 97400

ABCF Contacts:

Jacksonville ABCF
4204 Herschel #20
Jacksonville, FL
32210

Binghamton ABC
Bing. U, Hnm. Col.
#09501/Box6009
Binghamton, NY
13902-6009

NJ ABCF
P.O. Box 8532
Paterson, NJ
07508

Philly ABCF
4722 Baltimore Ave.
Philadelphia, PA
19143

Kent ABCF
P.O. Box 942
Kent, OH
44240

LA ABCF
P.O. Box 3671
Anaheim, CA
92803

Winnipeg ABCF
Box 64028,
RPO Morse PI
Winnipeg, MB
R2K 4K2 Canada

Orlando ABCF
P.O. Box 677572
Orlando, FL
32876-7572

Lancaster ABCF
P.O. Box 891
Lancaster, PA
17608

Ohio 7 PP transferred

Ohio 7 political prisoner Jaan K. Laaman was transferred from the Federal Prison at Leavenworth KS, to the state prison in Walpole MA.

He has been sent their to serve time stemming from a Massachusetts conviction for getting into a fire fight with MA State Troopers.

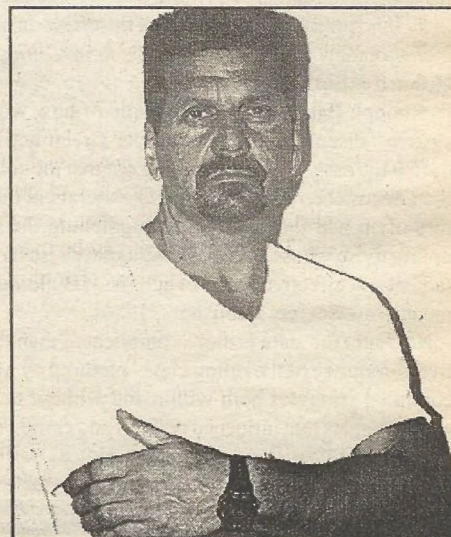
This move was very abrupt and unexpected to Jaan and the rest of us. Jaan was sent to the hole in Leavenworth and told to wait for a transfer. He was unable to pack any of his belongings. Though he was told he would be picked up the following day for the transfer, he was left in the hole for some weeks before actually being picked up. The transfer itself took many weeks which meant many weeks in segregation in several prisons Jaan was kept in along the way to his final destination.

Some time after his arrival at Walpole, Jaan finally received what was left of his property that was thrown together and shipped to him from Leavenworth. Much of his property was lost, damaged or otherwise destroyed on the way.

Because Jaan had been at Leavenworth for so long, he wants people to know that he has been moved and to let others know of his new address. Because he is now in a state prison, he has been issued a state prison ID number and his previous federal ID number is no longer valid. If you maintain a PP/POW list, please update his address and ID# so that he may continue to hear from supporters.

His new contact information is:

Jaan Laaman W41514
Box 100 / MCI Cedar Junction
South Walpole, MA 02071



LETTERS TO ONWARD:

Gender Issues in the Anarchist Movement...

Hello **ONWARD**,

I am an Anarchist activist and writer since 1994 and have been involved in the IWW, Food Not Bombs, an info-shop, the Arrowbear Anarchist Gathering, immigrant support networks, Zapatista support, and other actions, as well as writing some articles and a couple of zines. I had a couple comments on the article *Sexism and the Anarchist Movement* (an article by Angela Beallor that appeared in **ONWARD** #1, -- eds).

A lot of the writing style of that article is typical of the politically correct mentality poison to the Left in general and Anarchism in particular. It helps assure we'll never be able to relate to working class people who are not politically correct, rather they usually have a much darker and more twisted sense of humor. This is the case, men or women, Black, Hispanic or White... It's the white middle class who are humorless and put such value into words like Angels Dancing on the Head of a Pin.

On the other hand she does raise some good points. I dislike approaches toward "educating" people that rely so much on hostility and guilt as she seems to. But on the other hand, I remember feeling similarly about remarks made by some colleagues in LA. I didn't like the way they presented their concerns on acquaintance (in a manner from overtly very hostile to aggressive, all of which seemed assumptions about me, that I wicked person or villain of some sort). But it did help me in my mind to be more aware of things like trying to make sure women (sorry, "WyMYnnn") were having their voices heard in meetings and decision making processes.

Of course in LA this wasn't so hard since women were the key "leaders" of many of the various factions (such as FNB), but I did learn some useful things from that point of view, and it's valid to a degree. I just think identity politics can be taken so far as to become completely counterproductive. I think it's Maoist originated manipulation of bourgeois guilt hang-ups and the pervasive Puritan mentality that infects American thinking all across the political spectrum.

In the 60's, it was often the case that white activists would put issues important to members of racial minorities, and women on the back burner in favor of political, class or social issues more important to them personally (like keeping them from having to go to VietNam). This was wrong. But so is an endless cycle of purification of our own ranks, constant examination for adequate sensitivity and political correctness.

By focusing on the evil within our "friends" so much and in such a negative way, we assure ourselves to remain in a self-flagellating ghetto of irrelevancy. And playing the guilt card can backfire. I for one, as a working class person, have suffered from homelessness, sickness without medical care, near starvation, beatings by the police, imprisonment false and otherwise, the real extremes of poverty as bad as it can get in this country, street crime of every sort, severe beatings and one stabbing. It's hard for me not to react when challenged to a 'competition of guilt' to just say, "fuck off" to some liberal bougie college student person claiming some wounded-identity card. The emphasis should be more on our shared responsibility and our shared interests. White men aren't the only villains in our society, and membership in a victim identity doesn't absolve one of guilt. Black people are racist against black people. Women perpetuate gender bias against other women. White men may be the biggest devils but we all have the devil in us. It's been pumped into us since childhood by marketing, which by the way makes a twisted

wreckage of male psychology through the all-pervasive manipulation of male sexual desire to sell literally everything in the media. We're all the simultaneous victims and villains of the current system, and no animal rights loving, politically correct, unbiased, tofu-eating, tree-sitting, vegan, transgender, hermaphrodite, no matter how sensitive, is 100% free of this guilt and evil. By trying to purify ourselves, we only toy with infinity, the infinities of the paternal judeo-christian religions, which are meaningless in real life to real people.

"How many insensitivities can dance on the head of a pin?"

Just a few thoughts, Drifter "Bob"

Angela Responds to Drifter "Bob"

Drifter "Bob,"

I do see it as very necessary to couple the internal work (i.e. in ourselves or in the movement) to confront our internalized sexism, racism and homophobia with our work fighting reactionary forces within society. Both are very important and necessary. One without the other is leaving our work undone. As there are forces that exist within our movements that prevent certain people from participating or, at least, participating to their full potential, I cannot view all within the movement as "friends." So I am not so much suggesting that we "focus on the evil within our friends" as much as I am saying that we must fulfill all of our responsibilities.

My article was not written to claim a "wounded-identity card." Legitimate concerns about women facing sexual assault and sexism should never be thought of as a way to compete for a lower position in society. The struggle against sexism is not about identity politics. If I felt it was, then I would only be talking about a woman-centered analysis in dealing with sexism. This is class politics and the struggle against sexism, a great divider — along with racism — of the working class, is inextricably bound with our class struggle. There are differences within class that we cannot ignore. To do so hinders all of our liberation.

I would suggest that it is an insult to working class people to assume that this sort of dialogue is not within the confines of a working class world outlook. Making such ridiculous assumptions and generalizations does nothing but insult the intelligence of a huge sector of people. For instance, my mother who comes from a dirt-poor, coal mining, West Virginian family, has encouraged me to carry out this dialogue. As a woman, she faces similar attacks. As a working class person, she understands that we must confront that which divides us (racism, sexism, homophobia.) She does not want to be left behind in any liberatory change that is supposed to be liberatory for her as well.

I would suggest to Bob that my article should not be dealt with by how I present it (or how he perceives that I present it) but rather the content of what I present. Of course the article is somewhat hostile. You are claiming that this movement belongs to all of us, and many of us are only wishing that this were true. This should be a movement where women can be free of the fear of sexual assault and violence; a movement where women can participate equally. I am angry about this. Why focus on the fact that women are angry? Focus on why women are angry and help do something about it.

Poking fun at the very serious issue of sexism (I never spelled women with a "Y") is an insult to all women who face these issues. It should also be an insult to all men who care about the struggle against sexism (which I agree, negatively

impacts both men and women). This is real life and these are real people. We cannot always emphasize shared interests when women are facing violence and sexism in what is supposed to be our movement. And it is our shared responsibility to fight sexism. We all have work to do.

— Angela Beallor

The ABCF, DAN and ONWARD...

Heya!

Wow, thanks for sending me issue #1 of **ONWARD**. It's great to see such a well-done, new zine in print and I congratulate you for your effort. I'm especially glad to see that you're trying to educate people on the Black Liberation movement and have run several articles by Black Anarchists and Black Liberation prisoners.

There, now that I've praised you, here comes some criticism:

I'm deeply saddened to see that you've chosen to throw your lot in with the ABC-Fed., a sham organization which does little or nothing to help Anarchist prisoners. Indeed, ABC-Fed has gone so far as to launch attacks against Anarchist prisoners. I don't want anyone to think that the prisoners listed by ABCF don't deserve support. I do want to say, though, that donations to ABCF rarely find their way to Anarchist prisoners and as mentioned above, help fund ABCF attacks against Anarchist prisoners.

Let me give you an idea of what Anarchist prisoners face in prison. We are classified as gang members—just like street gangs and Aryan Brotherhood and other white supremacist groups. This has resulted in anti-racist activists like Chirs Plummer in TX and Rio Johnson here in Oregon being thrown into segregation units along with AB types, where they are ganged up on, assaulted and belittled. Rio has lost an eye to this type of violence. Chris has been sent to the hospital several times due to this sort of violence. Harold Thompson in TN has more recently been beaten and robbed by racists at his facility. In Oregon, receiving a letter from me is enough to get a prisoner thrown in the hole and fined and classified as gang members. But, not does the ABCF not support Rio, Chris and Harold, but they have launched international propaganda campaigns against them.

Also, you ran an article by the awesome Ali K. Abdullah, but you fail to notice that this extraordinary Anarchist warrior is not supported or listed in the ABCF directory? Neither am I or Harold or Chris or Rio.

So, to sum this up—fuck the ABCF!

If anyone from **ONWARD** or their readers are interested in supporting Anarchist prisoners, they can send contributions to Dave McCormick c/o Anarchist Prisoners Legal Aid Network (see page 20).

Here's another group that supports Anarchist prisoners: Raze the Walls Pub and Distro 2435 E. North St. PMB#255 Greenville, SC 29815

And: Ali K. Abdullah has set up an outstanding prisoner support group: Political Prisoners of War Coalition (see page 20).

I can't help from mentioning, now that I've looked over your zine again, that the Direct Action Network is also a sham organization. They will not support people arrested for felony charges, not even if the felonies are bogus. As far as supporting a new revolutionary movement goes, the courts of Seattle have upheld the rights

of Anarchist prisoners and arrestees more than DAN has. That's fucking sick. DAN will turn their back on anyone accused of a felony, whereas a court will try a person — with the assumption that they are innocent of any crime — before condemning them.

I applaud your effort to want to build and be a part of a revolutionary movement, but you need to examine who you're getting involved with and what their goals and agendas are.

Revoltingly,

Rob Los Ricos
aka Rob Thaxton #12112716
OSP 2605 State St.
Salem OR 97310

ONWARD Responds to Robert Thaxton

This is one of a few letters we have received from Anarchist prisoners since issue 1 came out questioning — if not outright condemning — our relationship with the ABCF. We work with the ABCF because we support what they do. The ABCF was established to support Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War with pre-existing definitions for who meets those standards (see issue #1 of **ONWARD** for ABCF's definition of PP/POWs). This is not to exclude other prisoners, but rather simply to build a principled support organization for people incarcerated as a result of their actions on behalf of building a revolutionary

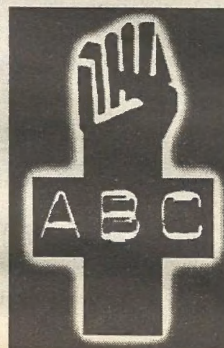
movement. When the ABCF formed in the mid-90s, organizations existed doing support work for Anarchist prisoners, but few if any existed for PP/POWs. Now that there is a more established PP/POW support network but not much of an Anarchist prisoner support network, people seem to want to co-opt the ABCF into something it was never established to be. Our goal shouldn't be to hijack the ABCF and change its goals, but rather to work together and concentrate on building Anarchist prisoner support networks in addition to a PP/POW support networks. This is not to say that the ABCF does not support any Anarchist PP/POWs, because they do, but the majority are not Anarchists.

However, the ABCF makes their financial documents (i.e. where donations go) very public; most of the donations they receive don't go to Anarchist prisoners because there aren't that many Anarchist PP/POWs as defined by the ABCF! All of the money they raise, however, goes into PP/POW defense. Again, the goal is — or should be — unity and solidarity, not divisiveness and sectarianism among Anarchists. The people supported by the ABCF deserve support for their revolutionary activities, and we should not try and change that, but rather add to it. The *Introduction to the ABCF* article in **ONWARD** (issue #1) did an excellent job explaining what the ABCF does. Neither the **Onward** Collective nor the ABCF has a stance against Anarchist prisoners. We work with the ABCF because we support their actions on behalf of PP/POWs and as part of supporting Anarchist prisoners in general. In short, the ABCF does exactly what it was set up to do, and does it well.

Support of political prisoners and prisoners of war, whether Anarchist or not, is a vital aspect of building social revolution and needs to be recognized as such. It's not a choice between supporting Anarchist and non-Anarchist political prisoners, both need support.

As for the Direct Action Network, their non-support of people with felony charges in Seattle is not something we agree with nor support. However, we do support many of the actions and activists within DAN, and because they are a network, many in DAN also disagree with the way in which things were handled in Seattle. We appreciate your concern, but feel that we indeed do have a knowledge of those we work with.

— Dan Berger



Send all correspondence to us, the Onward Collective, at:

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This is a partial listing of political prisoners and prisoners of war currently imprisoned in America. This is a list of class war prisoners compiled by the Anarchist Black Cross Federation. Those listed come from a variety of backgrounds- Anarchist, communist, socialist; New Afrikans, Puerto Rican independistas and white anti-imperialists. In our present state of struggle, the best thing we can do is learn from those who have been fighting for the same things for a long time... and now face extreme repression because of it. If we fail to support our prisoners, we have already lost. Please write to someone today! Following this list of prisoners is a list of organizations that do prisoner support for other types of political prisoners: animal and earth liberationists, anti-nuclear activists etc. Political prisoners need our support!

★Earth First! Journal
(Earth Liberation prisoners)-
PO Box 1415
Eugene OR 97440 USA
earthfirst@igc.org
www.earthfirstjournal.org

★The Jericho Movement
(class war prisoners)
PO Box 650, New York, NY 10009
jericho98@usa.net
www.thejerichomovement.com

★No Compromise (Animal and
Earth Liberation prisoners)☞
PO Box 1440
Santa Cruz CA 95060-0917
nocomp@waste.org
www.nocompromise.org

★Frontline Information Service
(Animal and Earth Liberation
prisoners)
www.enviroweb.org/ALFIS/
index2.shtml

★The Nuclear Resister
(anti-nuke/pacifist prisoners)☞
PO Box 43383
Tucson AZ 85733-3383 USA
nukeresister@igc.org
www.nonviolence.org/nukeresister/
whoweare.html

★Political Prisoners of War
Coalition☞
PO Box 554
Lincoln MA 10773 USA
cwrightsher@aol.com

☞ means the organization has a publication available that you should get!

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A.P.L.A.N.

Anarchist Prisoners' Legal Aid Network
818 SW 3rd Avenue PMB #354 Portland OR 97204 USA

The Anarchist Prisoners' Legal Aid Network (APLAN) is a prisoner-guided initiative, formed to provide legal aid and outside support for imprisoned Anarchists. We believe Anarchists need to support those who are arrested and already in jail. This isn't always easy, yet is a challenge our movement needs to take on.

There are dozens of Anarchists in prison, many of whom face abuses by the prison authorities. Some are held in segregation units with violent white supremacists, who are a threat to their lives. We can fight repressive action taken against Anarchist prisoners, but it will take effort from inside and outside the prisons.

Anarchist prisoners can contribute to struggles

on the outside, but need outside contact to do this. APLAN aims to facilitate these efforts and thus strengthen Anarchist practice as a whole.

We hope to provide sound legal advice and aid for Anarchist prisoners. This support for our imprisoned comrades is not based upon respect for the judicial apparatus, but rather in the spirit of mutual aid and solidarity in struggle. The sharing of research material and resources will be an immediate goal. We welcome contact with those who have specific knowledge of legal matters.

We hope for broad involvement, in multifarious ways, from throughout the Anarchist movement. Write for information about current activities and how to get involved!

Resisting Capitalist Globalization Mobilizing for Quebec City, April 2001

Next April 20-22, 2001, Quebec City has the dubious honor of hosting the Summit of the Americas, which brings together the 34 heads of state of North, South and Central America, as well as the Caribbean (except Cuba). Besides the usual scare-mongering about security and terrorism, and empty rhetoric about democracy and human rights, the stated purpose of the Summit will be to put the final touches on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) agreement.

The FTAA extends the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) to the entire hemisphere, and is to be implemented by no later than 2005. The FTAA is also an extension of the reach of capitalist globalization, aiming to submit health care, education, as well as environmental and labor standards to the so-called logic of the free-market. Negotiated behind closed doors, and imposed unilaterally, the FTAA process is yet another example of the kind of economic violence that aims to suppress the gains of popular struggles of the past, and reinforce the power of cash and cops over our lives.

Next April in Quebec City, the Anti-Capital-

ist Convergence (La Convergence des luttes anti-capitalistes, or CLAC, in French) will participate in a large-scale grassroots mobilization against the FTAA. The CLAC is organizing a Carnival Against Capitalism (including teach-ins, conferences, workshops, concerts, cabarets, street theatre, direct actions, protests and more)

as well as helping to convene a North American conference in conjunction with Peoples' Global Action against "Free" Trade (PGA).

The CLAC believes it is possible to radically and creatively oppose imperialism and the capitalist system while at the same time maintaining the spirit of openness that is necessary to develop a diverse and pluralistic resistance movement. The mobilization against the Summit of the Americas is being organized within the framework of a long-term struggle, in the North and South, against capitalist globalization.

You can contact the CLAC by e-mail (clac@tao.ca), by phone (514-526-8946 - temporary number) or by post (La CLAC, 2035 St-Laurent Boulevard, 2nd floor, Montreal (Quebec) CANADUH, H2X 2T3).

